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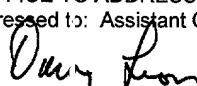
Atty. Dkt. No.: BARP025--2/KAM

Prior Application Examiner:  
Mary K. Zeman

**BOX PATENT APPLICATION**  
Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**Classification Designation:**  
**435-070.210**

**Prior Group Art Unit: 1643**

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**REQUEST FOR FILING CONTINUATION APPLICATION**  
**UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b)**

This is a request for filing a continuation application under Rule 53(b) (37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b)) of co-pending prior application Serial No. 08/900,902 filed July 25, 1997, entitled "HIV-3 RETROVIRUS AND ITS USE."

- ☒ 1. Enclosed is a copy of the prior application Serial No. 08/900,902 as originally filed, including specification, claims, drawings, and declaration. The undersigned hereby verifies that the attached papers are a true copy of the prior application as originally filed and identified above, that no amendments (if any) referred to in the declaration filed to complete the prior application introduced new matter

therein, and further that this statement was made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statement may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

- (a) ☒ The inventorship is the same as prior Application Serial No. 08/900,902.
- (b) ☐ Deletion of inventor(s). Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application, see 37 C.F.R. § 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).
- (c) ☒ Priority of foreign patent application number EP 88 109 200.1, filed June 9, 1988 in the European Patent Office is claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(e). The certified copy:
- ☐ is enclosed.
- ☒ has been filed in the prior Application Serial No. 08/900,902

- ☒ 2. Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$760 to cover the filing fee as calculated below and the fee for any new claims added in the Preliminary Amendment referred to in Clause No. 7 below.



CLAIMS AS FILED IN THE PRIOR APPLICATION  
LESS CLAIMS CANCELED BELOW

FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	FEE
Basic Fee -----				\$760.00
Total Claims	2 - 20 =	0 X	\$18.00 =	\$0.00
Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0 X	\$78.00 =	\$0.00
Multiple Dependent Claim(s) -----				\$-0-.00
<b>TOTAL FILING FEES:</b>				<b>\$760.00</b>
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	FEE

- ☐ 3. Applicant is entitled to Small Entity Status for this application.
- ☐ (a) A small entity statement is enclosed.
- ☐ (b) A small entity statement was filed in the prior nonprovisional application and such status is still proper and desired.
- ☐ (c) Small entity status is no longer claimed.
- ☒ 4. If the check is missing or insufficient, the Assistant Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 to 1.21 which may be required for any reason relating to this application, or credit any overpayment to Arnold White & Durkee Deposit Account No. 01-2508/BARP025--2/KAM.
- ☐ 5. Enclosed is a copy of the current Power of Attorney in the prior application.

- ☒ 6. Address all future communications to:

Patricia A. Kammerer  
ARNOLD WHITE & DURKEE  
P. O. Box 4433  
Houston, Texas 77210  
(713) 787-1400

- ☒ 7. The prior application is presently assigned to Innogenetics N.V.

- ☒ 8. Enclosed is a preliminary amendment. Any additional fees incurred by this amendment are included in the check at No. 2 above and said fee has been calculated after calculation of claims and after amendment of claims by the preliminary amendment.

- ☐ 9. Cancel in this application claims \_\_\_\_\_ of the prior application before calculating the filing fee. (At least one original independent claim must be retained).

- ☐ 10. Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence: --This is a continuation of co-pending application Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_ filed \_\_\_\_\_ --.

- ☒ 11. Enclosed are formal drawings.

- ☐ 12. An Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) is enclosed.

☐ (a) PTO-1449.

☐ (b) Copies of IDS citations.

- ☐ 13. Transfer the sequence information, including the computer readable form previously submitted in the parent application, Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_ filed \_\_\_\_\_, for use in this application. Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.821(e), Applicant states that the paper copy of the sequence listing in this application is identical to the computer readable copy in parent application Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_ filed \_\_\_\_\_. Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.821(f),

[illegible]

- Date:

Aug 23, 1999

*Patricia K. Hammer*

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HIV-3 RETROVIRUS AND ITS USE

Inventors: Robert De Leys

Bart Vanderborght

Eric Saman

Hugo Van Heuverswyn

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**PATENT**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Robert De Leys  
Bart Vanderborght  
Eric Saman  
Hugo Van Heuverswyn

Group Art Unit: Unknown

Examiner: Unknown

Atty. Dkt. No.: BARP025--2

Serial No.: Unknown

Filed: Concurrently Herewith

For: HIV-3 RETROVIRUS AND ITS USE

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Please amend this application as follows:

**In the Abstract**

Please add the following abstract:

--Described is a new variety of retrovirus designated HIV-3, also known as HIV-1 subtype O, samples of which are deposited in the European Collection of Animal Cell Cultures (ECACC) under V88060301. Further described are variants of the virus.--

**In The Specification**

At page 2, line 1, insert the following:

--This is a continuation of co-pending application Serial No. 08/900,902, filed July 25, 1997, which is a divisional of Serial No. 08/486,836, filed June 7, 1995, now issued as United

States Patent No. 5,795,743, which is a divisional of Serial No. 08/228,519, filed April 15, 1994, now issued as United States Patent No. 5,567,603, which is a divisional of Serial No. 07/460,913, filed March 23, 1990, now issued as United States Patent No. 5,304,466, which claims benefit under 35 U.S.C. §120 of PCT/EP89/00643, filed June 8, 1989 and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of EP 88 109 200.1, filed June 9, 1988.--

At page 3, line 8, please insert:

--Subsequent to the filing of prior application Serial No. 08/228,519, the medical industry and scientific community has recognized the change in classification of HIV-3 to HIV-1 subtype 0. See, e.g., Rayfield et al., *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 2:209-212 (1996); Janssens et al., *AIDS* 8:1012-1013 (1994); Simon et al., *AIDS* 8:1628-1629 (1994); Gürtler et al., *Journal of Virology* 68:1581-1585 (1994); and Vanden Haesevelde et al., *Journal of Virology* 68:1586-1596 (1994).--

On page 5, line 28 of the specification, please delete the sentence "The titration shown in panels A-E are typical for HIV-1" and insert therefor the following sentence: --Figure 2A, Figure 2B, Figure 2C, Figure 2D, and Figure 2E each shows a typical titration obtained with HIV-1.--

On page 5, line 29 of the specification, please delete "Panel F" and insert therefor --Figure 2F--.

On page 5, line 32, after the phrase "Figure 3" please insert --A--.

On page 5, line 32, after the word "and" please insert --Figure 3B shows differential antigen capturing on--.

On page 6, line 7, after the phrase "Figure 4" please insert --A--.

On page 6, line 7, after the word "and" please insert --Figure 4B shows the reactivity of anti-HIV sera on--.



On page 7, line 17, after the phrase "Figure 8" please insert --A, Figure 8B, Figure 8C, and Figure 8D--.

On page 7, line 19, after the phrase ". . . of four different sera" please insert --as shown in Figure 8A, Figure 8B, Figure 8C, and Figure 8D,--.

On page 8, line 6, please insert --A, Figure 10B, Figure 10C, Figure 10D, and Figure 10E-- after the phrase "Figure 10".

On page 8, line 6, please delete "is" and insert therefor --are--.

On page 8, line 12, please delete "panel A" and insert therefor --Figure 10A--.

On page 8, line 13, please delete "panel B" and insert therefor --Figure 10B--.

On page 8, line 14, please delete "panel C" and insert therefor --Figure 10C--.

On page 8, line 15, please delete "panel D" and insert therefor --Figure 10D--.

On page 8, line 17, please delete "panel E" and insert therefor --Figure 10E--.

On page 8, line 19, please insert --A, Figure 11B and Figure 11C-- after the phrase "Figure 11".

On page 8, line 24, please delete "left panel" and insert therefor --Figure 11A--.

On page 8, line 25, please delete "center panel" and insert therefor --Figure 11B--.

On page 8, line 26, please delete "right panel" and insert therefor --Figure 11C--.

On page 8, line 29, after the phrase "Figure 12" please insert --A, and Figure 12B--.

On page 8, line 30, please insert --p17 and p24-- before the word "gag" and insert --gene products-- after the word "gag".

On page 8, line 30, please insert --Figure 12C shows the positions of methionine and tryptophan residues in viral-- after the word "and" and before "pol gene products".

On page 9, line 11, please insert --A and Figure 13B-- after the phrase "Figure 13".

On page 9, line 11, please delete "is" and insert therefor --are--.

On page 9, line 19, please insert --A-I, Figure 14A-II, Figure 14A-III, Figure 14B-1, Figure 14B-II, and Figure 14B-III-- after the phrase "Figure 14".

On page 9, line 24, please insert --(B)-- after "stringent conditions".

At page 55, line 37, after the period ending the sentence, please add the following sentence:  
--RNA of the HIV-3 retrovirus virtually hybridizes neither with the Env gene or the LTR close to it, in particular not with the nucleotide sequence 8352-9538 of HIV-1, nor with the sequences of the Pol region of the HIV-1 genome under stringent conditions.--

### **In the Claims**

Cancel claims 45-56, without prejudice.

Please add claims 57-58, as follows:

--57. (New) A variant of HIV-3 retrovirus, comprising three core proteins with molecular weights of about 12 kD, about 17 kD, and about 25 kD, an endonuclease with molecular weight of about 31 kD, two reverse transcriptases with molecular weights of about 49 kD and about 62 kD, a transmembrane protein with molecular weight of about 41 kD, and an outer membrane protein with molecular weight of about 120 kD, the variant characterized in that its RNA does not hybridize with RNA or DNA derived from either the Env gene, the LTR sequence, or the Pol region of the HIV-1 genome, under stringent conditions.

58. (New) A variant of HIV-3 retrovirus, comprising three core proteins with molecular weights of about 12 kD, about 17 kD, and about 25 kD, an endonuclease with molecular weight of about 31 kD, two reverse transcriptases with molecular weights of about 49 kD and about 62 kD, a transmembrane protein with molecular weight of about 41 kD, and an outer membrane protein with

molecular weight of about 120 kD, the variant characterized in that its LTR sequence is about 70% or less homologous to the LTR sequence of HIV-1 or HIV-2.--

### REMARKS

The active claims in this case are claims 57-58.

The specification has been amended to recite the relationship with the parent case, and to incorporate portions of the preliminary amendment filed July 25, 1997 in parent case 08/900,902. Portions of the preliminary amendment in the parent case that amended the abstract and title thereof to refer specifically to antibody compositions have not been included, as the present claims are not directed to antibody compositions.

The original application was filed without an abstract of the disclosure. This Preliminary Amendment is being filed to provide such an abstract. The specification is also amended to incorporate the amendments made during prosecution of prior application Serial No. 07/460,913.

The specification at page 3 has been amended to introduce the current classification, HIV-1 subtype O virus, for what had been termed "HIV-3" in the original application. After the inventors first reported on their discovery of HIV-3, specifically variant ANT<sub>70</sub>, the medical and scientific community recognized that HIV-3 should more appropriately be classified as a subtype of HIV-1. This subtype was designated "O" where O stands for "outliers". Several journal articles have been provided in the preceding case Serial No. 08/486,836 to substantiate the scientific recognition that HIV-3, e.g., ANT<sub>70</sub>, is now classified as HIV-1 subtype O.

The new claims find support at p. 12, lines 6-14; p. 16, line 27-p. 19, line 20; and p. 20, lines 7-10.

It is believed that no fee is due; however, should any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 to 1.21 be required for any reason, the Assistant Commissioner is authorized to deduct said fees from Arnold White & Durkee Deposit Account No. 01-2508/BARP025--2/KAM.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia A. Kammerer  
Reg. No. 29,775  
Attorney for Assignee  
INNOGENETICS N.V.

ARNOLD, WHITE & DURKEE  
P.O. Box 4433  
Houston, Texas 77210-4433

Date:

Aug 23, 1999

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Substantial progress has been made in our understanding of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome or AIDS. The principal causative agent has been demonstrated to be a non-transforming retrovirus with a tropism for T4 helper/inducer lymphocytes (1,2) and it has been estimated that millions of people world-wide have already been infected. Infection with this virus leads, at least in a significant percentage of cases, to a progressive depletion of the T4 lymphocyte population with a concomittant increasing susceptibility to the opportunistic infections which are characteristic of the disease.

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Epidemiological studies indicate that human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1), the etiological agent responsible for the majority of AIDS cases and which is currently the most widely disseminated HIV, probably had its origins in Central Africa (3). The discovery of this virus did not necessarily imply the existence of other types of human immunodeficiency viruses. Nevertheless, a second group of human immunodeficiency-associated retroviruses, human immunodeficiency virus type 2 (HIV-2), was identified in West Africa (4,5). An HIV-2 virus is disclosed in EP-A-0 239 425. An HIV-1 virus is disclosed in WO 86/02383. Other similar, but not identical, retroviruses have also been isolated from simian sources (simian immunodeficiency virus, SIV) such as African green monkeys (6,7) and macaques (8,9). The simian isolates have been shown to be genetically more closely related to HIV-2 than HIV-1 but are nevertheless distinct (10).

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One characteristic of human immunodeficiency viruses which complicates their comparison is their genetic variability; genetic variants arise spontaneously and with high frequency. A comparison of various HIV-1 isolates revealed that some regions of the genome are highly variable while others are reasonably well conserved (11-16). Similar polymorphisms have also been observed for HIV-2 (17). The

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regions with the greatest genetic stability are presumably those regions coding for the regions of viral proteins which are structurally or enzymatically essential. The viral  
5 genes with the greatest overall genetic stability are the gag and pol genes, while some regions of the env gene and the genes coding for regulatory proteins such as art, tat, sor and 3'orf exhibit a high degree of variability. Some of the major structural features of the gag and pol gene  
10 products are apparently shared not only by all of the variants of a particular HIV type, but have, at least to some extent, been conserved between virus types. Antiserum produced against HIV-1 crossreacts with the gag and pol gene products of HIV-2, albeit with a lower affinity than for the  
15 corresponding HIV-1 gene products. However, in spite of the demonstrable immunological crossreaction, at the nucleic acid level there is little sequence homology and no significant hybridization between these two viruses can be detected except under very low stringency conditions (17).

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A higher degree of relatedness can be demonstrated between SIVagm (STLV-III agm, nearly or completely identical to Human Lymphotropic Virus type 4 (15)) and HIV-2. Immunological crossreaction is not limited only to the gag  
25 and pol gene products but extends to the env gene products as well. Nevertheless, genomic analysis of SIVagm and HIV-2 showed them to be genetically distinguishable (19). DNA probes specific for HIV-2, although able to hybridize to SIVagm sequences, hybridize preferentially to HIV-2 (18).

30

We now report the isolation and characterization of a novel human immunodeficiency virus from a Camerounian woman and her partner. Geographically, this virus comes from a region in Africa located between West Africa where HIV-2 is  
35 endemic, and East-Central Africa where HIV-1 is endemic. This isolate is shown immunologically to be antigenically

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more closely related to HIV-1 than is HIV-2, yet an analysis of partial cleavage products obtained by chemical cleavage of the gag and pol gene products demonstrate that this isolate is neither HIV-1 nor HIV-2. This novel isolate could represent an evolutionary link between HIV-1 and HIV-2. This novel virus will be referred to as HIV-3 hereinafter.

10

Accordingly, the invention relates to an HIV-3 retrovirus or variants of this virus having the essential morphological and immunological properties of the retrovirus deposited in the European Collection of Animal Cell Cultures (ECACC) under V 88060302.

15

A virus isolation was performed from blood from an asymptomatic Camerounian woman who is the partner of an HIV-seropositive man with generalized lymphadenopathy.

20

Serum from the woman was moderately positive (ratio O.D./cut-off of 4.5) in the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (EIA, Organon Teknika) and had a low titer (1/40) in the immunofluorescent antibody assay for HIV-1 but gave ambiguous results in the HIV-1 Western blot assay with clear bands at p33, p55/55 and p64 but very weak bands at p24, gp41 and gp120. The virus was isolated by co-cultivation of

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the woman's lymphocytes with PHA-stimulated lymphocytes from healthy uninfected donors in a medium consisting of RPMI 1640 buffered with 20 mM HEPES (hydroxyethylpiperazine ethanesulfonate) and supplemented with 15 % fetal calf serum, 5 g/ml hydrocortisone, 75 u/ml interleukin-2 (IL-2) and 2 g/ml polybrene.

30

After 52 days in culture, virus was detected in the culture as judged by the presence of syncytia and on the basis of positive immunofluorescence observed when a laboratory reference anti-HIV antiserum was incubated with

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acetone-fixed cells from the culture. The presence of reverse transcriptase was also detected in the culture

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1 supernatant ( $10^4$  cpm/ml, 27 X background). Cell-free  
culture supernatant was used to passage the virus on fresh  
lymphocytes. After 15 days, CPE was again observed and  
5 reverse transcriptase detected in the supernatant. The  
virus was further propagated in PHA-stimulated lymphocytes  
from healthy blood donors and was transferred to continuous  
cell lines of leukemic origin. Virus-containing supernatant  
was tested in parallel with culture supernatants known to  
10 contain HIV-1 in the differential antigen capturing test  
which is described in detail below. The results of  
this comparison indicated that the new isolate was not  
HIV-1.

15 The new virus was then characterized with respect to its  
protein antigens and nucleic acids. The cell lines used for  
propagating the virus can be, depending on the case, lines  
of the CEM, HUT, Molt-4, or MT4 type, or any other  
immortalized cell line which bears the T4 receptor on its  
20 cell surface.

A preferred cell line for the continuous propagation of  
HIV-3 is Molt-4. Molt-4 cells infected with HIV-3 were  
deposited with the ECACC on June 3, 1988 under number V  
88060301. Establishment of a chronically-infected cell line  
25 can, for example, be carried out as follows:

Molt-4 cells ( $10^5$ /ml) and preferably Molt-4 clone 8 cells  
(obtained from N. Yamamoto, Yamaguchi, Japan) are cocultured  
with infected human lymphocytes ( $10^6$ /ml) in RPMI 1640  
30 culture medium buffered with 20 mM HEPES and containing 10 %  
fetal calf serum. Within one to two weeks, a cytopathic  
effect is observed in the culture which is followed by cell  
death. A fraction of the cells in the culture survive the  
infection and produce virus continuously. With continued  
35 culturing, these cells increase in number and can be  
passaged. Supernatants from these cells can be used a a



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source of virus.

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Furthermore, the invention relates to a purified retrovirus having the essential morphological and immunological properties described below. In many cases, the unique characteristics of HIV-3 can best be appreciated by comparison with the same type of characteristics relating to the other human immunodeficiency viruses, HIV-1 and HIV-2.

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Brief description of the drawings

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In Figures 1 to 16 the designations HIV-3 (ANT 70) and HIV-3 (ANT 70 NA) refer to two strains of a new HIV-3 virus isolated from a Camerounian woman and her partner from which HIV-3 (ANT 70) has been deposited under ECACC V88060301.

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Figure 1 shows a procedure for preparing cleavage maps of viral proteins.

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Figure 2 shows differential antigen capturing on virus-containing culture supernatants.

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Differential antigen capturing is performed as described hereinafter. The solid line represents the results obtained using a broad-spectrum anti-HIV-1 IgG while the broken line depicts the results obtained using an IgG which was rather specific for HIV-1. The titrations shown in panels A-E are typical for HIV-1. Panel F shows the result obtained with HIV-3 (ANT 70) containing supernatant.

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Figure 3 shows differential antigen capturing on HIV-1 and HIV-3 (ANT 70 NA) supernatants.

Differential antigen capturing was performed as described hereinafter. The solid line depicts the results obtained on

1 plates coated with the broad spectrum anti-HIV IgG while the  
broken line represents the results obtained on plates coated  
with IgG which shows less crossreactivity with HIV types  
5 other than HIV-1.

Figure 4 shows the reactivity of anti-HIV sera on HIV-1 and  
HIV-2 Western Blot strips.

10 The reactivities of 3 different sera on HIV-1 and HIV-2  
Western blot strips are shown. Sera: 1. anti-HIV-1, 2.  
anti-HIV-3 (ANT 70), 3. anti-HIV-2 (isolate 53). The  
molecular weights indicated are those given by the  
manufacturer (Dupont Biotech).

15 Figure 5 relates to the comparison of gag and pol proteins  
of several HIV-1 isolates, HIV-2rod and HIV-3 (ANT 70).

20 Proteins were separated electrophoretically and blotted as  
described later. The blot was incubated with a  
broad-spectrum anti- HIV antiserum followed by (anti-human  
IgG)/alkaline phosphatase- labeled conjugate to visualize  
the proteins.

25 A. HIV-2rod, B. an HIV-1 laboratory isolate, C. HIV-3 (ANT  
70), D. an HIV-1 laboratory isolate, E. HIV-1 (SF4).

Figure 6 shows a comparison of HIV-3 (ANT 70) and HIV-3 (ANT  
70 NA) proteins.

30 Proteins were separated electrophoretically and blotted as  
described later. The blot was incubated with the BSR  
antiserum followed by (alkaline phosphatase)/anti-human IgG  
conjugate to visualize the proteins. Lane 1: HIV-3 (ANT 70  
NA), lane 2: HIV-3 (ANT 70), lane 3: HIV-1 (SF4). The  
35 apparent intensity difference between lanes 1 and 2 is  
caused by the difference in the amount of material loaded.

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Figure 7 relates to the ability of various human anti-HIV-1 sera to capture viral antigens.

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A number of human sera were diluted 1:1000 and coated directly on microwell plates. Detergent-treated culture supernatants containing HIV-1 (SF4), HIV-3 (ANT 70), HIV-2rod or HIV-2 (isolate 53) were incubated and the bound antigen was detected using a broadspectrum (anti-HIV)/horseradish peroxidase conjugate. Sera 1-7 were of African origin while sera 8-11 were from Europeans. The greater ability of African sera to capture non-HIV-1 antigen can, in part, be explained by their higher anti-p24 titers (data not shown).

15

Figure 8 shows the effect of coating IgG dilution on the binding of HIV isolates.

Successive 2-fold dilutions were made of four different sera, beginning at a dilution of 1:1000 and were used to coat microwell plates. Detergent-treated supernatants of HIV-1 (SF4), HIV-3 (ANT 70), HIV-2rod and HIV-2 (isolate 53) were diluted to give approximately the same optical density on plates coated with the antiserum shown in panel B at a dilution of 1:1000. Bound antigen was detected using the broad-spectrum (anti-HIV IgG)/horseradish peroxidase conjugate.

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Figure 9 shows antigen capturing of virus isolates using human polyclonal and mouse anti-HIV-1 monoclonal antibodies.

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Wells were coated and incubated as described in the text. The IgGs used are as follows:

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1. human polyclonal anti-HIV IgG , 2. MAb CLB 59, 3. MAb CLB

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1 21, 4. MAb CLB 64, 5. MAb CLB 14, 6. MAb CLB 16, 7. MAb CLB  
47, 8. MAb CLB 13.6 (anti-p18), 9. MAb CLB 19.7, 10. MAb CLB  
13.4 (anti-p18).

5 Figure 10 is a comparison of the reactivity of human  
anti-HIV antisera to different HIV types.

10 Lysates of HIV-1 (SF4), HIV-3 (ANT 70), HIV-2rod and HIV-2  
(isolate 53) were separated electrophoretically on  
SDS-polyacrylamide gels, blotted onto nitrocellulose, and  
incubated with a high titer anti-HIV-1 antiserum (panel A),  
a lower titer anti-HIV-1 antiserum (panel B), serum from the  
15 woman from whom HIV-3 (ANT 70) was isolated (panel C), her  
partner from which HIV-3 (ANT 70 NA) was isolated (panel D)  
and anti-HIV-2 antiserum from the person from whom HIV-2  
(isolate 53) was isolated (panel E).

20 Figure 11 shows titrations of anti-HIV sera by enzyme  
immunoassay.

25 Microwell plates were coated with lysates of HIV-1 (SF4),  
HIV-3 (ANT 70) and HIV-2 (isolate 53). Serum from an  
HIV-1-infected European (left panel), antiserum to HIV-3  
(ANT 70 NA) (center panel) and antiserum to HIV-2 (isolate  
53) (right panel) were titrated in 2-fold dilutions  
beginning at a dilution of 1:100 on all three coated plates.

30 Figure 12 shows the positions of methionine and tryptophan  
residues in viral gag and pol gene products.

35 Amino acid positions for the p17 gag proteins are given  
starting from the first methionine in the coding sequence.  
Positions for the p24 gag protein are given starting at the  
p17/p24 proteolytic cleavage site. Positions for the pol  
gene are shown after alignment with the highly conserved

1 tryptophan doublet in the HIV-1 sequence at positions 556  
and 557. The positions of a conserved protease sequence,  
the protease/reverse transcriptase cleavage site and the  
5 reverse transcriptase/endonuclease cleavage site are  
indicated. In this case, the terms p24 and p17 are used in  
the genetic sense to refer to the largest and second largest  
viral core proteins respectively. The term "HIV-2 (LAV-2)" is  
a synonymum for HIV-2 rod.

10 Figure 13 is a comparison of partial cleavage products of  
gag and pol gene products of HIV-1 (SF4) [HIV-1 in the  
figure], HIV-3 (ANT 70) [isolate 70 in the figure], HIV-2rod  
[HIV-2 (LAV-2) in the figure] and HIV-2 (isolate 53)  
15 [isolate 53 in the figure]. The terms p24 and p17 are used  
in the genetic sense to indicate the largest and second  
largest viral core proteins, respectively.

Figure 14 shows hybridization of cDNA probes to viral RNA.

20 Viral RNA from HIV-1 (SF4), HIV-2rod, and HIV-3 (ANT 70)  
were spotted onto a membrane filter as described in  
Materials and Methods. The filters were hybridized under  
either nonstringent (A) or stringent conditions and  
25 autoradiographed

### 1. Morphology

30 Electron microscopy of HIV-3-infected MT4 cells revealed the  
presence of extracellular virus particles having a diameter

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1 of approximately 120nm and consisting of an outer envelope  
which surrounds an inner elongated core which has a diameter  
of approximately 20 to 40 nm and which appears in some thin  
5 sections to be slightly cone-shaped in contrast to the more  
or less cylindrical appearance of the HIV-1 core.  
Nevertheless, HIV-3 is morphologically very similar to HIV-1  
and HIV-2 but is readily distinguished from other human  
retroviruses such as HTLV-I and HTLV-II.

10 2. Protein and glycoprotein antigens.

The virus present in the culture supernatant of  
HIV-3-infected Molt-4 cells was concentrated by  
15 precipitation with polyethyleneglycol (average molecular  
weight 6000) followed by centrifugation. The resulting  
pellet was resuspended in phosphate buffered saline, layered  
on top of a 20 % sucrose cushion and pelleted at 100,000 g  
for 1.5 hours. The pelleted virus was then dissociated in  
20 62.5 mM Tris, pH 5.7, containing 2 % 2-mercaptoethanol, 1 %  
sodium dodecyl sulfate and 10 % glycerol and the principle  
viral antigens were separated by electrophoresis on a  
polyacrylamide gel (12,5 %) under denaturing conditions.  
Molecular weight markers were included on the same gel so as  
25 to provide a basis for estimating molecular weights. Once  
separated, the proteins were electrophoretically transferred  
to nitrocellulose paper (Western blot) which was then  
incubated with an antiserum derived from a person infected  
with an HIV. In the initial experiments, a high titer  
30 antiserum was used from an individual who was infected with  
HIV-1 and which had been previously shown to crossreact with  
HIV-2 gag- and pol-derived proteins. In this manner, the  
molecular weights of the HIV-3 gag and pol gene products  
could be compared with those of HIV-1 and HIV-2.  
35 The apparent molecular weights observed for the HIV-3  
proteins are close to those observed for both HIV-1 and

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HIV-2. Nevertheless, small yet reproducible molecular weight differences between HIV-3, and HIV-1 and HIV-2 proteins are also evident.

5

The protein blots revealed that HIV-3, like HIV-1 and HIV-2, possesses three core proteins. In the case of HIV-3, these proteins were found to have molecular weights of

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approximately 12,000, 16,500 and 25,000 respectively. By convention, proteins are frequently referred to by a "p" for protein or "gp" for glycoprotein, followed by a number which, when multiplied by 1,000, gives the approximate molecular weight of the polypeptide. The three major core proteins of HIV-3 will be referred to hereafter as p12, p16, and p25 respectively.

15

The molecular weight values as determined are expected to be correct to within 10 % of the true values. Nevertheless, much confusion exists with regards to molecular weight values of proteins since the construction of the

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electrophoresis apparatus used and the source of the buffer components varies from laboratory to laboratory. It is

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therefore necessary when comparing the apparent molecular weights of the protein antigens of HIV-3 with respect to those of HIV-1 or HIV-2, to subject all samples to electrophoresis on the same gel. Such a gel can, for example, be seen in Fig. 5. In particular, it is

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evident that while, in the case of the major core protein, the molecular weight values of the homologous proteins of the three HIVs are very close, the protein derived from HIV-1 is the smallest. The major core protein of HIV-2 is somewhat larger than that of HIV-1, as has been previously reported. The homologous protein from HIV-3 is slightly larger than the major core protein of HIV-2. The calculated molecular weights of these proteins are given in Table 1.

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Table 1 - Comparison of molecular weights of gag and pol gene products.

	<u>gag</u>				<u>pol</u>		<u>env</u>	
					ENDO	REVERSE TRANSCRIP- TASE**	TRANS MEMBRANE PROTEIN	OUTER MEMBRANE PROTEIN
HIV-1	12 KD	17* KD,	24 KD	31 KD	49	KD/65 KD	gp41	gp120
ANT 70	12 KD	16.5 KD,	24.8 KD	31 KD	48.5	KD/62 KD	gp41	gp120
HIV-2	12 KD	16 KD,	24.3 KD	31 KD	53	KD/69 KD	gp41	gp120

\* Some strain to strain variation in molecular weight has been observed for this protein.

\*\* Molecular weights are given for both species of reverse transcriptase.

Similarly, molecular weight differences are also apparent between the three HIVs with respect to the second core protein which has, in most HIV-1 strains, a molecular weight of 18,000. Strain to strain differences in the molecular weight of this protein have, however, been documented in the case of HIV-1, and the molecular weight of this protein may be 17,000 in some isolates. The homologous protein from HIV-2 has a molecular weight of approximately 16,000 while the HIV-3 protein has an intermediate molecular weight of approximately 16,500.

By analogy with HIV-1 and HIV-2, HIV-3 also possesses two



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forms of the virally encoded enzyme reverse transcriptase. These two species also differ slightly in molecular weight from the corresponding species in HIV-1 and HIV-2 and are characteristic for HIV-3. These molecular weights are also summarized in Table 1.

5

HIV-3 possesses an additional pol gene-derived polypeptide which is an endonuclease with apparent molecular weight of 31,000 and which does not differ significantly in molecular weight from the homologous proteins from HIV-1 or HIV-2.

10

When protein blots containing HIV-3 proteins are incubated with serum obtained from an individual infected with this virus, two additional proteins can be seen. These proteins are derived from the env gene and are the viral envelope glycoproteins. The smallest protein, which is the transmembrane protein, migrates as a broad band with an apparent molecular weight of between 40,000 and 45,000. This protein will henceforth be referred to as gp41, with the understanding that the protein exhibits some intrinsic heterogeneity with respect to its apparent molecular weight and migration on polyacrylamide gels. The larger protein, which is the outer membrane protein, is similarly somewhat diffuse on polyacrylamide gels and has a molecular weight of approximately 120,000. This protein will henceforth be referred to as gp120. It should be noted that the apparent heterogeneous migration of these two species on polyacrylamide gel is not due to heterogeneity in the polypeptide chain but rather in posttranslational glycosylation. In particular, the gp120 is heavily glycosylated and the apparent molecular weight which one observes is to some degree influenced by the cell line used to produce the virus.

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In addition to the Western blot, viral protein antigens can also be visualized by radioimmunoprecipitation assay (RIPA).

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For this purpose, viral proteins can be radioactively labeled metabolically in vivo by culturing HIV-3-infected cells in the presence of 35S-cysteine and 35S-methionine (200 Ci/ml) in RPMI 1640 medium devoid of these two amino acids and supplemented with dialyzed fetal calf serum. After 16 hours, the labeled virus is harvested from the culture supernatant by centrifugation over a 20 % sucrose cushion at 100,000 g for 1.5 hours. The resulting pelleted virus is then resuspended in RIPA buffer (20 mM triethanolamine, pH 8.0, 0.5 M NaCl, 0.5 % Nonidet P40, 0.1 % sodium deoxycholate, and 1 mM phenylmethylsulfonylfluoride). Alternatively, the virus may be radioactively labeled with 125 I using chloramine T by the technique familiar to persons versed in the art. In this case, virus is purified from the supernatant of infected cells by pelleting the virus through a cushion of 20 % sucrose, resuspending the virus in phosphate buffered saline and banding the virus by ultracentrifugation on a 20 to 50 % sucrose gradient at 60,000 g for 12 hours. The banded virus can be located in the fractionated gradient either by reverse transcriptase assay or by an antigen capturing assay. The fractions containing virus are pooled and Triton X-100 is added to a concentration of 0.5 %. The Triton X-100- lysed virus may then be iodinated.

For immunoprecipitations, 100,000 -200,000 cpm of labeled viral protein in RIPA buffer is reacted with 5 microliters of a test serum in a volume of 200 microliters for 16 hours at 4°C. The resulting immune complexes are then bound to Protein A-Sepharose (Pharmacia), washed extensively, and the bound proteins eluted with electrophoresis sample buffer containing 1 % SDS. The antigens are subsequently analyzed by electrophoresis followed by autoradiography.

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The protein antigens of HIV-3 can be characterized with respect to those of HIV-1 and HIV-2 using two different but related approaches. On one hand, the antigens may be characterized on the basis of their ability to crossreact with antisera from persons infected with HIV-1 and HIV-2. On the other hand, antisera from persons infected with HIV-3, which contain antibodies produced in response to HIV-3 antigens, can be used to test crossreactivity to HIV-1 and HIV-2 proteins. The antigenic relationships between HIV-3, and HIV-1 and HIV-2 are substantially illustrated in the examples given below.

15

The results of these experiments indicate that HIV-3 is only distantly related to HIV-2 since crossreactivity is only observed with respect to the viral core proteins and pol gene products. No crossreactivity of the env gene products was observed when anti-HIV-2 antiserum was incubated with HIV-3 proteins or when anti-HIV-3 antiserum was incubated with HIV-2 proteins.

20

In contrast, HIV-3 is more closely related to HIV-1 since anti- HIV-3 antiserum crossreacts not only with the gag and pol gene products of HIV-1 but also to some extent with the gp41 and gp120 env gene products, albeit with a lower affinity. Anti- HIV-1 antiserum similarly crossreacts with all of the protein antigens of HIV-3, but with a lower affinity than for the proteins of HIV-1.

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In the examples which follow, it is demonstrated that HIV-3 is antigenically substantially different from HIV-1 on the basis of 1.) a different pattern of reactivity with anti-HIV-1 antiserum than that observed for HIV-1, 2.) a drastically reduced ability to be recognized by mouse monoclonal antibodies raised against the HIV-1 p24 and p17 core proteins, and 3.) preferential recognition of HIV-3 proteins, including the envelope proteins, over HIV-1 proteins by antisera from HIV-3- infected individuals.

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5 In spite of the genetic variation characteristic of human  
immunodeficiency viruses, a test based, for example, on  
HIV-1 proteins derived from a particular strain will  
function satisfactorily for detecting antibodies raised in  
response to other HIV-1 variants. This can, in particular,  
also be seen in the example in which monoclonal antibodies  
were tested for their ability to react with antigens derived  
10 from HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3 isolates. In this case, the  
monoclonal antibodies were raised against the core proteins  
from the HIV-1 IIIB strain, yet react very strongly to  
proteins derived from HIV-1 strain SF4. In contrast, these  
same monoclonal antibodies react only weakly or not at all  
15 with HIV-3 core proteins. This indicates that the antigenic  
differences between HIV-1 and HIV-3 are of such a magnitude  
that immunological assays based on the use of HIV-1 proteins  
will not be suitable for testing sera from individuals  
infected with HIV-3.  
20 Finally, in the examples given below, differences have been  
shown in the number and/or positions of methionine and  
tryptophan residues in the most highly conserved gag and pol  
gene products.

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### 3. HIV-3 NUCLEIC ACIDS

#### 30 A. HIV-3 viral RNA.

The RNA of HIV-3 when deposited on a Hybond-H (Amersham)  
filter according to the "dot blot" technique, did not  
hybridize to HIV-1 DNA under stringent hybridization  
35 conditions.

By "stringent conditions" or "nonstringent conditions" are

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meant the conditions under which the actual hybridization and/or the subsequent wash steps are performed.

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Dot blot hybridizations were performed by spotting dilutions of viral RNA from HIV-1 strain SF4, HIV-2 rod and HIV-3 strain ANT 70 onto Hybond-H filters.

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The dilution series for each virus corresponded to viral RNA pelleted from the equivalent of 5, 2.5, 1.25 and 0.62 milliliters of culture supernatant. The RNA was fixed onto the filter by U.V. irradiation for 2 min and subjected to hybridization by bringing the filter into contact with a 32P- labeled DNA probe. The probe chosen was derived from the HIV-1 sequence spanning nucleotides 487-4652 (Sac I -

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Eco R1) and includes a portion of the 5' long terminal repeat, the entire gag region and most of the pol gene, subcloned in the vector pUC 13. Hybridization of the 32P-labeled probe with the filter was carried out under stringent conditions in 3 X SSC, 0.5 % milk powder, 1 % SDS, 10 % dextran sulfate, 50 % formamide (volume/volume) at

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42°C for 18 hrs (1 X SSC corresponds to 0.15 M NaCl, 0.015 M sodium citrate). The subsequent wash steps were carried out under stringent conditions in 0.1 X SSC and 0.1 % SDS at 65°C (2 - 30 minute washes). The filter was then dried and autoradiographed with enhancing screens at -70°C. Following

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autoradiography, only spots were visible which corresponded to HIV-1 viral RNA. No hybridization was observed to HIV-2 or either of the two HIV-3 strains. HIV-3 therefore appears to be only distantly related to HIV-1.

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B. cDNA and subclones of cDNA derived from HIV-3.

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The conditions under which cDNA corresponding to HIV-3 sequences was synthesized and cloned are described below. HIV-3 (strain ANT 70) from 1 liter of culture was precipitated with polyethylene glycol 6000, redissolved in phosphate buffered saline, and pelleted through a 20 %

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sucrose cushion. The resulting virus pellet was dissolved in 6 M guanidinium chloride in 20 mM dithiothreitol and 0.5 % Nonidet P-40. CsCl was added to a concentration of 2 molar and the solution containing disrupted virus was layered onto a 1.2 milliliter cushion of 5.7 M CsCl containing 0.1 EDTA. Viral RNA was pelleted by centrifuging for 20 hrs. at 25,000 rpm in a Beckman SW28 rotor at 15°C. The pelleted RNA was redissolved, extracted with phenol and precipitated with ethanol and 2 M LiCl.

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One-fifth of the viral RNA, prepared as described above, was used to direct the first step in the synthesis of cDNA which made use of an oligo (dT) primer which served to prime the synthesis of the first cDNA strand.

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A commercially available kit supplied by Amersham was used for preparation of HIV-3 cDNA and made use of an exogenously added reverse transcriptase to synthesize the first strand. The synthesis of the second strand was performed using E. coli DNA polymerase I in the presence of RNase H to digest away the RNA strand of the RNA/DNA hybrid.

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Second strand synthesis was performed in the presence of 32p- dCTP to label the cDNA. The resulting cDNA was treated with T4 DNA polymerase to create blunt ends, the cDNA was methylated to protect possible internal EcoRI cleavage sites, and was then coupled to EcoRI linkers, also supplied by Amersham. The EcoRI restriction sites were then cleaved and the cDNA was sized on a 1.2 % agarose gel. The region in the gel corresponding to a cDNA length of 500 to 2000 base pairs was excised and the cDNA was eluted and cloned in

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the vector pUC13 which had been cleaved with EcoRI and dephosphorylated. The DNA was then used to transform competent cells of E. coli MC1016 (lambda). The resulting colonies were transferred to Pall membranes (Pall Biodyne), lysed and denatured with 1.5 M NaCl, 0.5 M NaOH and neutralized with 3 M NaOAc, pH 5.5. Screening of colonies harboring an insert of HIV-3 was performed under

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colonies harboring an insert of HIV-3 was performed under

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moderately stringent conditions in a buffer containing 5 X SSC, 5 X Denhardt's solution, 0.2 % SDS, 250 mg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA, overnight at 65°C, using 32P-labeled  
5 plasmid containing the SacI - EcoRI fragment of HIV-1 discussed above. Following hybridization, filters were washed as follows:

1. 1 hour in 2 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at room temperature.
- 10 2. 30 minutes in 0.1 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at room temperature.
3. 20 minutes in 2 X SSC, 0.1 SDS at 42°C.
4. 20 minutes in 0.1 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at 42°C.

15 Following autoradiography of the filter, several weakly positive colonies were identified which were then grown for analysis. It was expected that the positive signal would either be due to weak homology with the gag or pol regions of HIV-1, or due to some sequence homology with the R  
20 region of the LTR.

#### C. Sequences contained in HIV-3 cDNA.

25 A clone carrying the largest insert, which was found to be 906 base pairs in length and is referred to as iso 70-11, was selected for sequence analysis. A number of subclones of the insert were prepared by digesting the insert with various restriction enzymes and subcloning the  
30 resulting fragments in the pUC 13 vector. Sequence determinations were performed according to the dideoxy-method, described by Sanger, (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 74: 5463-5467, 1977), using a kit purchased from Boehringer which makes use of 17-mer M13 primers. Sequence  
35 analysis of cDNA clone iso 70-11 revealed that the insert corresponded to the 3' end of the viral genome which

1 possessed a poly (A) chain at the 3' end.

The HIV-3 retrovirus contains a 3' LTR which is composed of  
a U3 region as well as an R region. Like the 3' LTR region  
5 of HIV-1, clone iso 70-11 contains an AATAAA polyadenylation  
signal located approximately 23 nucleotides from the 3' end  
of the R region. Analysis of the HIV-3 sequence revealed  
approximately 70 % homology with the corresponding 3' LTR  
sequence of HIV-1 and less than 55 % homology with the  
10 corresponding sequence of HIV-2.

Conversely, hybridizations using HIV-1 gag - pol sequences  
as the labeled probe to detect crosshybridization with HIV-3  
RNA revealed no detectable hybridization when the  
15 hybridization was carried out under stringent conditions.  
This again indicates that the viruses are only distantly  
related and that a distinction can be made between HIV-1 and  
HIV-3 at the nucleic acid level in the region of the genome  
encompassing the gag and pol genes. This same labeled probe  
20 did, however, hybridize to RNA derived from HIV-1 strain  
SF4.

In addition, the invention relates to a composition  
comprising at least one antigen, in particular, a protein or  
25 glycoprotein of HIV-3 retrovirus. Such a composition can be  
used in methods for detecting antibodies and in kits for  
carrying out such methods.

The HIV-3 virus has proven to be a usable as a source of  
30 antigen for detecting antibodies in people who have come  
into contact with HIV-3. As such, the virus may be grown  
and concentrated by the methods already described and a  
lysate prepared by treating the virus with a suitable  
detergent. A preferred detergent for preparing a total



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viral lysate is Triton X-100, used at a concentration of 0.5 % . Another preferred detergent is Nonidet P-40 (NP-40), also used at a concentration of 0.5 % .

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Alternatively, viral protein may be purified from lysates of the virus. A preferred method for purifying these proteins is affinity chromatography. For example, the viral antigens may be separated on a preparative polyacrylamide gel and the individual antigens eluted in purified form. These may further be used to raise antisera in, for example, rabbits which are specific for the individual viral proteins. The IgG fraction derived from immune rabbit serum can be coupled to a solid phase such as CNBr-activated Sepharose 4B (Pharmacia) and used to selectively remove individual viral antigens from viral lysates. These proteins may then be eluted from the affinity support using a low pH buffer and further purified using standard chromatographic techniques of which an example is given by Montelaro et al., J. of Virology (1982) 42: 1029-1030.

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The invention relates generally to any composition which can be used for the diagnosis of HIV-3 infection or for tests which have a prognostic value. These diagnostic procedures involve the detection of antibody in serum or other body fluid, which are directed against at least one of the antigens of HIV-3.

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Preferred compositions are viral lysates or purified antigens which contain at least one of the viral core proteins, p12, p16, and p25 or envelope proteins gp41 or gp120, or pol gene-derived proteins, such as p31. Especially preferred compositions are those which simultaneously contain, by way of example, the following proteins,

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- p25 and gp120
- p25 and gp41

- p25, gp11 and gp120
- p12, p16 and p25
- p25, p31 and gp120

It should be understood however, that the above mentioned compositions are only meant to serve as examples and that the invention relates to all lysates or protein preparations containing one or more of the above mentioned proteins or glycoproteins.

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- core proteins of HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3, and in particular the major core protein of each virus type, homologous to the HIV-3 p25 protein.

- envelope glycoproteins of HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3 and in particular the outer envelope glycoproteins of each virus type, homologous to HIV-3 gp120.

- core proteins of HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3 together with the envelope glycoproteins of HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3, in particular the major core protein of each virus type, homologous to the HIV-3 p25 protein, together with the major outer envelope protein of each virus, homologous to HIV-3 gp120.

- a combination of the core proteins and envelope

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proteins of HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3 and in particular homologous to the HIV-3 proteins p25 and gp120 respectively and a protein derived from the pol gene of HIV-1, HIV-2 and HIV-3, in particular the proteins of each virus type homologous to the p31 endonuclease protein of HIV-3.

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Furthermore, the invention relates to an antigen providing a single band in polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis, said antigen comprising, in common with one of the purified antigens of HIV-3 retrovirus, an epitope that is recognized by serum of persons carrying anti-HIV-3 antibodies. The amino acid sequences corresponding to these epitopes can readily be determined by isolating the individual proteins either by preparative electrophoresis or by affinity chromatography and determining the amino acid sequence of either the entire protein or the fragments produced enzymatically by trypsin or chymotrypsin digestion or chemically by the procedures described in detail below. The resulting peptide or polypeptides can subsequently be sequenced by Edman degradation. The invention relates therefore to any protein, glycoprotein or peptide, either derived directly from the virus or produced by cloning any cDNA fragments of the virus in bacterial expression vectors, or viral expression vectors for the expression of inserted DNA in mammalian or insect cells, and purifying the expressed protein by the methods described above. Furthermore, the invention also relates to synthetic peptides, produced either by Merrifield synthesis or Fmoc chemistry, which may be subsequently purified to homogeneity and which contain in their sequences epitopes which are shared by the natural HIV-3 antigens. Antigens which share epitopes with viral proteins may easily be recognized by their reaction with antibodies present in the serum of individuals infected with HIV-3, either by

1 Western blotting, or radioimmunoprecipitation. In the case  
of small peptides which are not able to bind to  
nitrocellulose, these peptides can be detected by binding to  
5 nylon membranes (Pall Biodyne or Amersham) and reacting the  
membrane with anti-HIV-3 antiserum. In particular, the  
invention relates to epitopes contained in any of the HIV-3  
core proteins, p12, p16 and p25 or in a protein which may  
contain as part of its polypeptide chain epitopes derived  
10 from a combination of the core proteins. Furthermore, the  
invention relates to epitopes contained in either of the two  
HIV-3 envelope glycoproteins, gp41 and gp120 as well as any  
protein which contains, as part of its polypeptide chain,  
epitopes derived from a combination of the HIV-3 envelope  
15 glycoprotein or a combination of the HIV-3 envelope  
glycoproteins and HIV-3 core protein. The invention  
additionally relates to polypeptides whose synthesis is  
directed by expression vectors constructed by recombinant  
DNA methods which incorporate epitopes derived from HIV-3  
20 proteins or glycoproteins together with epitopes derived  
from the proteins or glycoproteins of either HIV-1 and/or  
HIV-2 into a single polypeptide chain. Preparing such a  
construction would involve excising the relevant coding  
regions from cDNA of HIV-3 as well as HIV-1 and HIV-2, and  
25 coupling the DNA in phase so as to form a coding sequence  
which, when inserted into an expression vector  
possessing the necessary signal sequences, directs the  
synthesis of a hybrid protein in which epitopes of the  
HIV-3, HIV-1 and HIV-2 are contained.

30 Furthermore, the invention relates to methods for the  
detection of antibodies against HIV-3 retrovirus in a  
biological fluid, in particular for the diagnosis of a  
potential or existing ARC or AIDS caused by HIV-3  
35 retrovirus, characterized by contacting body fluid of a  
person to be diagnosed with a composition containing one or

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more of the proteins or glycoproteins of HIV-3 or with a lysate of the virus, or with an antigen possessing epitopes common to HIV-3, and detecting the immunological conjugate formed between the anti-HIV-3 antibodies and the antigen(s) used.

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Preferred methods include, for example, immunofluorescence assays or immunochemical assays.

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Immunofluorescence assays typically involve incubating, for example, serum from the person to be tested with cells infected with HIV-3 and which have been fixed and permeabilized with cold acetone. Immune complexes formed are detected using either direct or indirect methods and involve the use of antibodies which specifically react to human immunoglobulins. Detection is achieved by using antibodies to which have been coupled fluorescent labels, such as fluorescein or rhodamine.

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Immunochemical assays may be performed, for example, as follows:

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- a specific quantity of HIV-3 virus extract or of a composition referred to according to the invention is deposited in the wells of a microtitration plate.
- the excess unbound material is removed after a suitable incubation period by washing.
- a suitable dilution or dilutions of serum of other body fluid which is to be tested for the presence of antibodies directed against one or more of the protein or glycoprotein antigen of HIV-3 is introduced into the well.
- the microtitration plate is incubated for a period of time necessary for the binding reaction to occur.
- the plate is washed thoroughly.

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- the presence of immune complexes is detected using antibodies which specifically bind to human immunoglobulins, and which have been labeled with an enzyme, preferably but not limited to either horseradish peroxidase, alkaline phosphatase, or beta-galactosidase, which is capable of converting a colorless or nearly colorless substrate into a highly colored product. Alternatively, the detection system may employ an enzyme which, in the presence of the proper substrate(s), emits light.

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- the amount of product formed is detected either visually, spectrophotometrically, or luminometrically, and is compared to a similarly treated control.

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Other detection systems which may also be used include those based on the use of protein A derived from *Staphylococcus aureus* Cowan strain I, protein G from group C *Streptococcus* sp. (strain 26RP66), or systems which employ the use of the biotin-avidin binding reaction.

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Another method of immunoenzymatic detection of the presence of antibodies directed against one or more of the HIV-3 antigens is the Western blot. The viral antigens are separated electrophoretically and transferred to a nitrocellulose membrane or other suitable support. The body fluid to be tested is then brought into contact with the membrane and the presence of the immune complexes formed is detected by the method already described. In a variation on this methods, purified viral antigen is applied in lines or spots on a membrane and allowed to bind. The membrane is subsequently brought into contact with the body fluid to be tested and the immune complexes formed are detected using the previously described techniques.

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The presence of antibodies in body fluid may also be

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detected by agglutination. HIV-3 lysates or a HIV-3 lysate, antigen or purified antigen composition referred to according to this invention, is used to coat, for example, latex particles which form an uniform suspension. When mixed with serum containing antibodies to the antigen present, the latex particles are caused to agglutinate and the presence of large aggregates can be detected visually.

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The present invention also relates to labeled extracts of HIV-3 or compositions as previously described. The labeling can be of any type, such as enzymatic, chemical, fluorescent or radioactive.

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Furthermore, the invention relates to a method for detecting the presence of HIV-3 antigens in body fluids. This may, for example, be accomplished in the following manner:

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- the IgG fraction of antiserum, derived either from humans infected with HIV-3 or from animals injected with an HIV-3 lysate or composition already described, is placed in the wells of a microtitration plate.

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- after a suitable period to allow adsorption, the excess unbound material is washed away.
- a body fluid containing the antigen to be detected is placed in the well.

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- the microtitration plate is allowed to incubate for a suitable period of time to allow binding to occur.
- the plate is then thoroughly washed with a suitable buffer.

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- the presence of bound antigen is detected either directly or indirectly, for example, by using immunoglobulins which are similarly specific for the antigen(s) to be detected and which have been labeled, preferably with one of the aforementioned enzymes.
- an appropriate substrate is then added and the extent

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of reaction is compared to a control in order to measure the amount of antigen present.

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Furthermore, the invention relates to a kit for the detection of anti-HIV-3 antibodies in biological fluids, comprising an HIV-3 lysate or a composition as referred to above and a means for detecting the immunological complexes formed.

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In the case of kits designed to detect specific antibodies by immunoenzymatic methods such a kit would include:

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- an HIV-3 lysate or composition of one of the types already described, preferably in a purified form, and preferably attached to a solid support such as a microtitration plate.
- a conjugate between an enzyme and an immunoglobulin fraction which is capable of binding to the antibodies to be detected, or a conjugate between an enzyme and bacterial protein A or protein G.
- a control antigen which possesses no epitopes which are shared by any human immunodeficiency virus.
- appropriate buffers for performing the assay.
- an appropriate substrate for the enzyme.

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Kits for the detection of specific antibodies which make use of labeled antigen would include:

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- an appropriately labeled antigen or combination of antigens of the types already described.
- protein A or anti-human immunoglobulins, preferably coupled to an insoluble support, such as Protein A-Sepharose 4B (Pharmacia) or an equivalent support.
- control antigen, which is not recognized by anti-HIV-3 antisera.

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- appropriate buffers for performing the assay.
- if appropriate, substrates for the detection of enzymatically labeled antigen.

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The invention further relates to kits, developed for the detection of HIV-3 antigens in biological fluids, which comprise :

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- anti-HIV-3 immunoglobulins, preferably coupled to a solid support such as a microtitration plate.
- anti-HIV-3 immunoglobulins conjugated to an enzyme.
- negative control antigen, which would not be recognized by anti-HIV-3 immunoglobulins.
- positive control antigen which consists of one of the HIV-3 antigens or compositions already described.
- appropriate buffers for conducting the test.
- an appropriate substrate for detection of bound enzyme.

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Furthermore, the invention relates to an immunogenic composition containing an envelope glycoprotein of HIV-3 retrovirus, in particular, gp41 or gp 120, or a part of said glycoprotein, in combination with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle suitable for the constitution of vaccines effective against HIV-3. The invention additionally relates to any peptide or polypeptide which contains within its sequence all or part of the protein backbone of the HIV-3 retrovirus, as well as peptides which result from addition, substitution, or deletion of amino acids which do not affect the general immunological properties of said peptides.

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The invention further relates to monoclonal antibodies characterized by their ability to specifically recognize epitopes contained in the HIV-3 antigens or compositions as previously defined, and in particular, monoclonal antibodies

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raised specifically against said antigens and produced by traditional techniques. The invention also relates to monoclonal antibodies of human origin produced by  
5 immortalizing B-cells derived from persons infected with HIV-3, for example, by transforming the B- cells with Epstein-Barr virus and subcloning the transformants.

10

The invention likewise relates to the production of polyclonal antisera in animals which recognize one or more HIV-3 antigens and which is produced by infecting animals with purified HIV-3 or an HIV-3 antigen or combination of antigens, and in particular the proteins or glycoproteins of HIV-3.

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The antibodies, either polyclonal or monoclonal, can be used for a wide variety of purposes which include neutralization of HIV-3 infectivity, the detection of HIV-3 antigens in biological fluids or in infected cells, and the purification  
20 of HIV-3 protein and glycoprotein antigens.

25

The invention further relates to nucleic acids, optionally labeled which are derived in part, at least, from RNA of HIV-3 retrovirus or of variants of this virus.

30

The invention relates likewise to the use of cDNA or parts of the cDNA or the recombinants containing them, which are characterized by containing at least a portion of the cDNA corresponding to the entire genomic RNA of the HIV-3  
retrovirus. Such cDNAs may be used as probes for the specific detection of HIV-3 sequences in biological fluids, tissues and cells. The probes are preferably also labeled, either radioactively or chemically, alternatively using enzymatic, fluorescent or chemiluminescent labels which  
35 enable the probes to be detected. Preferred probes for the specific detection of HIV-3 and diagnosis of HIV-3 infection

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are probes that contain all or a portion of the cDNA complementary to the HIV-3 genome. In this context, an especially advantageous probe can be characterized as one which contains, in particular, the nucleic acid sequence contained in clone iso 70-11 and which includes the viral LTR-R sequence which is located at both the 5' and 3' ends of viral genomic RNA and at both the 5' and 3' ends of integrated proviral DNA.

10

It is nevertheless understood that the probes which can be used for the diagnosis of HIV-3 infection are in no way limited to the probes described above, and that the invention incorporates all sequences which originate from the HIV-3 genome or its naturally occurring variants and includes sequences encoding the viral core proteins (gag gene), the two forms of reverse transcriptase and the endonuclease (pol gene), as well as the two viral envelope glycoproteins (env gene).

20

The invention also relates to HIV-3 nucleic acid sequences which have been incorporated into a recombinant nucleic acid comprising a nucleic acid from a vector, and having said cDNA or part of said cDNA inserted therein. Such a construction could be used for replicating the viral cDNA or its fragments in an organism or cell other than the natural host so as to provide sufficient quantities of the probe to be used for diagnostic purposes.

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A probe generated in such a manner can be employed in a diagnostic test for specific detection of HIV-3 which incorporates the following essential steps :

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- 1
- labeling of the probe generated as described above by the methods previously described.
  - bringing the probe into contact under stringent
- 5 hybridization conditions with DNA from infected cells or viral RNA from infected cells or biological fluids, once said DNA or RNA has been, preferably, applied to a membrane and has been rendered accessible to the probe.
- 10
- washing the membrane with a buffer under circumstances in which stringent conditions are maintained.
  - detection of the labeled probe, preferably by autoradiography in cases in which the probe has been radioactively labeled, or by a suitable
- 15 immunodetection technique in case the probe has been labeled chemically.

20 The invention further relates to a process for the production of HIV-3 retrovirus characterized by culturing human T4 lymphocytes or human lymphocytic cell lines of leukemic origin which carry the T4+ phenotype with lymphocytes or cell lines that have previously been infected with an isolate of HIV-3 retrovirus, as well as recovering and purifying the retrovirus from the culture medium.

25 The invention likewise relates to a process for the production of antigens of HIV-3 retrovirus, characterized by lysing the retrovirus, preferably with a detergent, and recovering the lysate containing said antigens.

30 The invention additionally relates to a process for the production of any of the HIV-3 proteins or glycoproteins p12, p16, p25, p31, gp41, gp 120 or reverse transcriptase as previously defined, or a part thereof, characterized by inserting the nucleic acid encoding the proteins or

35 glycoproteins in an expression vector, transforming a host with said vector, culturing the transformed host as well as

1 recovering and purifying the expressed protein. The process  
includes vectors which may or may not direct the synthesis  
of fusion proteins and includes but is not limited to  
5 bacterial expression vectors, mammalian expression vectors  
such as vaccinia virus, and vectors based on baculovirus for  
the expression of cloned genes in insect cells.

#### 10 EXAMPLES

#### 10 MATERIALS AND METHODS

##### Virus and cell culture

##### 15 a. Virus strains and cell lines.

HUT-78 cells chronically infected with ARV-4 (HIV-1 SF4),  
originally isolated by J. Levy, San Francisco, U.S.A. (20)  
and

20 uninfected HUT-78 cells were kindly provided by S. Sprecher,  
Brussels, Belgium. LAV-2rod originally from L. Montagnier,  
Paris, and CEM cells were obtained from J. De Smeyter,  
Leuven, Belgium. Isolate 53, an HIV-2 isolate, was isolated  
in this laboratory (21).

##### 25 b. Virus isolations.

Virus isolations were performed in a manner similar to that  
described by Levy and Shimabukuro (22), with modifications.  
30 Lymphocytes from patients as well as from healthy donors  
were isolated from heparinized whole blood on Lymphoprep  
(Nyegaard and Co., Oslo, Norway) and were cultured in RPMI  
1640 containing 20 mM HEPES, 15 percent fetal calf serum  
(Gibco), 5 g/ml hydrocortisone (Merck), 75 U/ml IL-2 and 2  
35 g/ml polybrene (Aldrich).

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Lymphocytes from healthy donors were stimulated with 2 g/ml phytohemagglutinin (PHA, Wellcome) for 3 days prior to use. Fresh PHA-stimulated lymphocytes were added to the virus isolation cultures every 3 to 4 days. Cultures were monitored for cytopathic effect, immunofluorescence, using a broad specificity, polyclonal reference antiserum (23), and the presence of antigen in the culture supernatants (Innotest VCA- HIV, Innogenetics). The broad specificity reference (BSR) anti-serum used was derived from an HIV-1-infected donor and was shown experimentally to have an exceptionally high titer ( $\geq 1,000,000$  in an enzyme immunoassay based on recombinant HIV-1 p24 protein) and to crossreact strongly with the gag and pol gene products of other HIV types, in particular, HIV-2. Reverse transcriptase was also assayed essentially as described (24).

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In order to establish chronically infected, permanent cell lines, virus-infected primary lymphocytes were co-cultured with Molt 4 clone 8 cells (25), kindly provided by N. Yamamoto, Yamaguchi, Japan, and monitored for cell growth. Virus production was monitored by the reverse transcriptase assay as well as antigen capturing.

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#### Differential antigen capturing.

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A test system was developed whereby a distinction can be made between HIV-1 and other related human immunodeficiency viruses. The system is based on a comparison of the ability of two different polyclonal IgG preparations, one with a broad anti-HIV specificity which is due its exceptionally high titer, particularly against the major core protein, and one with a lower titer which reacts preferentially with HIV-1, to capture detergent-treated virus in culture supernatants. Detection of captured antigen is achieved by using a (broad specificity IgG)/horseradish peroxidase

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conjugate.

The test detects primarily but not exclusively the p24 core protein.

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#### Monoclonal antibodies to HIV-1

The panel of monoclonal antibodies used has been described (26). The antibodies were prepared against native viral proteins in Triton X-100-disrupted HIV-1 preparations.

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#### Protein analysis

##### a. Electrophoresis.

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Polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis of viral proteins was performed essentially as described by Maizel (27).

##### b. Protein blotting.

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Blotting was performed either in a Bio-Rad transblot cell at 400 mA for 4 hours using the carbonate buffer described by Dunn (28) or using the LKB semi-dry blotting apparatus at 0.8 mA/cm<sup>2</sup> for 1 hour in 48 mM Tris, 39 mM glycine, 0.0375 % sodium dodecylsulfate (SDS) and 20 % methanol.

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##### c. Generation of partial cleavage products.

Viral proteins were analyzed by the technique shown in Figure 1. Advantage was taken of the fact that corresponding proteins from the various isolates have similar molecular weights. Proteins were separated on 12.5 percent SDS- polyacrylamide gels together with a marker lane of ARV-4 proteins which was excised following electrophoresis, blotted and incubated with an anti-HIV antiserum to reveal the positions of the viral proteins.

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The marker blot was in turn used to locate the approximate positions in the Coomassie blue stained portion of the gel of the viral proteins to be cleaved. Horizontal gel slices containing the proteins were excised, transferred to glass tubes and subjected to chemical cleavage.

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#### 1. Cyanogen bromide cleavage

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The gel slice was incubated with 10 ml of a freshly prepared 40 mg/ml solution of CNBr (Merck) in 0.3 N HCl for 3 hours at room temperature in a fume hood. Following the incubation, the gel slice was equilibrated with SDS-sample buffer for electrophoresis in the second dimension.

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#### 2. BNPS-Skatole cleavage.

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The gel slice was incubated with 10 ml of a freshly prepared saturated solution of 2-(-2'-nitrophenylsulfenyl)-3-methyl-3'-bromoindoline (BNPS-Skatole, Pierce) in 70 percent acetic acid; 30 % H<sub>2</sub>O containing 0.1 % phenol, for 3 hours at room temperature, protected from light. Following the incubation, the gel slice was equilibrated by repeated washing in SDS-electrophoresis sample buffer.

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Following cleavage, the individual lanes were excised from the gel slices rotated 90° and placed on top of a 10 to 20 percent SDS-polyacrylamide gradient gel. On completion of electrophoresis, the gel was blotted onto nitrocellulose (Schleicher and Schuell) and blocked with PBS containing 1 mg/ml casein (Merck). Only cleavage products with molecular weights in excess of 10 kD are able to be visualized since peptides with lower molecular weights do not bind efficiently to nitrocellulose. Blots were incubated with a broad spectrum anti-HIV antiserum followed by goat anti-human IgG: alkaline phosphatase conjugate (Promega).



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Partial cleavage products were then visualized by reaction with 5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolylphosphate and nitro blue tetrazolium (Sigma).

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#### Viral Nucleic Acids

10 a. Hybridization to viral RNA.

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Virus from culture supernatants was harvested by pelleting through cushions of 20 % sucrose by centrifugation at 26,500 rpm for 1,5 hrs. at 4°C and was disrupted in 10 mM Tris, pH 7.4, 10 mM NaCl, 10 mM EDTA containing 0,5 % sodium dodecylsulfate. Aliquots of the disrupted virus were spotted onto a membrane of Hybond H (Amersham) in amounts corresponding to 5, 2.5, 1.25 and 0.62 milliliters of original culture supernatants. The RNA deposited onto the filter was fixed to the membrane by irradiation with ultraviolet light for 2 hrs. The RNA bound to the filter was then subjected to hybridization with an HIV-1 cDNA probe which had been labeled by nick translation with 32p-dCTP. The hybridization was carried out under stringent conditions in 3 X SSC, 0,5 % milk powder, 1 % SDS, 10 % dextran sulfate and 50 % formamide at 42°C for 18 hrs. Following hybridization, the filter was washed twice under stringent conditions in 0.1 X SSC and 0.1 % SDS for 30 minutes. Hybridization was detected by autoradiography at -70°C with enhancing screens. Hybridizations were similarly performed using a probe derived from the env region of HIV-2.

Hybridizations were also performed under nonstringent conditions in 5 X SSC, 25 % formamide, 5 X Denhardt's solution, 10 % dextran sulfate, and 100 g/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA at 37°C overnight. The filter was

subsequently washed 4 times for 15 minutes in 5 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at room temperature and autoradiographed.

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10 Virus was pelleted from 1 liter of culture supernatant using polyethylene glycol 6000, redissolved in PBS and pelleted through a 20 % sucrose cushion. The resulting pellet of virus was disrupted in 6 M guanidinium chloride in 20 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 6.5, containing 20 mM dithiotreitol and 0.5 % NP-40. Solid CsCl was added to a concentration of 2 molar. The solution containing disrupted virus was layered onto a cushion of 5.7 M CsCl containing 0.1 M EDTA and the viral RNA was pelleted by centrifugation at 25,000 in a Beckman SW 28 rotor at 15°C for 20 hrs. 15 Following centrifugation, the RNA was redissolved, extracted with phenol and precipitated with ethanol and 2 M LiCl.

One-fifth of the viral RNA prepared was used to direct the first step in the synthesis of cDNA using a kit supplied by Amersham. cDNA synthesis was primed using oligo (dT). the synthesis was carried out using the reverse transcriptase supplied with the kit. Second strand synthesis was performed using E. coli DNA polymerase I in the presence of RNase H to digest away the RNA strand of the RNA/DNA hybrid. The synthesis of the second strand was performed in the presence of 32P-cCTP to label the cDNA. The resulting cDNA was treated with T4 DNA polymerase to create blunt ends, the cDNA was methylated to protect possible internal EcoRI cleavage sites, and was then coupled to EcoRI linkers (Amersham). The EcoRI sites in the linkers were then cleaved and the cDNA was sized on a 1.2 % agarose gel. The region of the gel corresponding to a cDNA length of 500 to 2000 base pairs was excised, and the cDNA was eluted and cloned in the vector pUC13 which had previously been cleaved

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with EcoRI and dephosphorylated. After ligation, the DNA was used to transform competent cells of E. coli MC1016 (lambda). The resulting colonies were transferred to Pall membrane filters (Pall Biodyne), lysed and denatured with 1.5 M NaCl, 0.5 M NaOH and neutralized with 3 M NaOAc, pH 5.5. Screening of colonies harboring an insert of HIV-3 was carried out by hybridization under moderately stringent conditions in 5 X SSC, 5 X Denhardt's solution, 0.2 % SDS, 250 mg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA overnight at 65°C. Hybridization was performed using the HIV-1 SacI-EcoRI fragment. Following hybridization, the filters were washed as follows:

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1. 1 h. in 2 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at room temperature.
2. 30 minutes in 0.1 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at room temperature.
3. 20 minutes in 2 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at 42°C.
4. 20 minutes in 0.1 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at 42°C.

20

After washing, the filters were autoradiographed at -70°C using intensifying screens.

Hybridizations were also performed under the nonstringent conditions used for nonstringent hybridization of the HIV-1 and HIV-2 probe.

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#### c. Analysis of cDNA clones.

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Colonies giving a positive hybridization signal were grown for analysis. Plasmids were isolated, cleaved with EcoRI and subjected to agarose gel electrophoresis to confirm the presence of an insert and to determine its size. Of 96 colonies analyzed 17 were found to contain inserts. Five were taken for further analysis and ranged in size from approximately 800 to 1600 base pairs in length.

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d. Sequence determinations.

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Nucleotide sequence determinations were performed according to the dideoxynucleotide method of Sanger (Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA 74: 5463-6467, 1977), using a kit supplied by Boehringer. Sequencing was carried out using 17-mer M13 primers.

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e. Hybridizations of ANT 70 cDNA to HIV-1 and HIV-2 viral RNA.

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The ANT 70 cDNA clone containing the largest insert (iso 70-11) was used for hybridization to the filter onto which viral RNAs had been deposited.

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Hybridization was performed under stringent conditions in 3 X SSC, 0.5 % milk powder, 1 % SDS, 10 % dextran sulfate, and 50 % formamide at 42°C for 18 hrs. Following hybridization, the filter was washed with 0.1 X SSC, 0.1 % SDS at 65°C (2-30 minute washes) after which the filter was autoradiographed at -70°C with an intensifying screen.

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1 Results

Virus isolation

5 As part of a continuing study on heterosexual transmission  
of HIV, a virus isolation was performed from blood from a  
Camerounian woman and her partner. As before, the two  
isolated strains will be named HIV-3 (ANT 70) (woman) and  
HIV-3 (ANT 70 NA) (man), respectively. For convenience, the  
10 shorter terms ANT 70 and ANT 70 NA will also be used. The  
woman is the partner of an HIV- seropositive man with  
generalized lymphadenopathy. Serum from the woman was  
moderately positive (ratio O.D./cut-off of 4.5) in the  
enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (EIA, Organon Teknika) and  
15 had a low titer (1/40) in the immunofluorescent antibody  
assay for HIV-1 but gave ambiguous results in the HIV-1  
Western blot assay with clear bands at p33, P53/55 and p64  
but very weak bands at p24, gp41 and gp120. The woman had  
elevated serum IgG and IgM levels and a CD4/CD8 ratio of  
0.46. Virus was isolated by co- cultivation of the woman's  
20 lymphocytes with PHA-stimulated lymphocytes from healthy  
uninfected donors. After 52 days in culture, virus was  
detected in the culture as judged by the presence of  
syncytia and on the basis of positive immunofluorescence  
observed when a laboratory reference anti-HIV antiserum was  
25 incubated with acetone-fixed cells from the culture. The  
presence of reverse transcriptase was also detected in the

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1 culture supernatant (  $10^4$  cpm/ml, 27 X background).

Cell-free culture supernatant was used to passage the virus  
on fresh lymphocytes. After 15 days, CPE was again observed  
5 and reverse transcriptase detected in the supernatant. A  
comparison of detergent-treated culture supernatant from  
this isolate (ANT 70) with other isolates by differential  
antigen capturing revealed, however, that this isolate was  
not HIV-1.

10 These results are illustrated in Figure 2. It is evident by  
the lower O.D. values that the isolate (ANT 70) is, in  
contrast to the other isolates, poorly recognized by the  
HIV-1 specific IgG but, like the other isolates, was  
readily captured by the broad specificity IgG (panel F).

15 The other isolates, which were subsequently all shown to be  
HIV-1 strains using an HIV-1 specific MAb (CLB MAb 14), all  
gave higher O.D. values on the plates coated with specific  
IgG than on plates coated with the broad specificity  
reference IgG.

20 An attempt was made to transfer the virus to a permanent  
cell line by co-cultivating isolate (ANT 70)-infected  
primary lymphocytes with Molt-4 clone 8 cells. In the  
initial phase of the infection, extensive cytopathic effect  
was observed with syncytium formation and cell death.

25 Within several weeks, cell growth was detected. The cells  
gave a positive immunofluorescence when tested using a broad  
spectrum anti-HIV antiserum and the presence of antigen and  
reverse transcriptase was easily detectable in the culture  
supernatant.

30 Virus was similarly isolated from the partner of the woman  
from whom isolate (ANT 70) was isolated (strain ANT 70 NA).  
The man was suffering from lymphadenopathy and was  
35 classified as class 3 according to the CDC classification  
system. The man also had elevated serum IgM and IgG levels

1 and a CD4/CD8 ratio of 0.4. Virus was detected in the  
supernatant of the culture on day 18. Detergent-treated  
supernatant containing this virus was also analyzed by  
5 differential antigen capturing and found to react in a  
manner similar to isolate (ANT 70) (Figure 3). The binding  
of antigen derived from this isolate was again less with  
HIV-1 specific IgG than with the broad specificity IgG.

10 Serum from the person from whom the isolate (ANT 70 NA) was  
derived was incubated with HIV-1 and HIV-2 Western blot  
strips (Biotech). Additional strips were also incubated  
with serum from a donor infected with HIV-1 as well as serum  
from the person from whom HIV-2 (isolate 53) was isolated.  
15 These results are shown in Figure 4. Serum from the person  
infected with ANT 70 NA crossreacted to a significant extent  
with virtually all HIV-1 proteins, including the envelope  
proteins. In contrast, serum from the HIV-2-infected  
individual crossreacted only with the gag p24 protein, p34  
20 endonuclease and p68 reverse transcriptase. The  
anti-HIV-1 serum recognized only the p26 gag protein of  
HIV-2, while serum from the carrier of ANT 70 NA recognizes  
this protein and the HIV-2 reverse transcriptase.

25 Characterization of viral proteins.

Virus in the culture supernatant was precipitated using  
polyethylene glycol 6000 (Merck) and the resulting material  
30 was redissolved and pelleted through a 15 percent sucrose  
cushion. The pelleted virus was dissociated in SDS-sample  
buffer and analyzed by polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis  
followed by protein blotting. The blot, shown in figure 5,  
was incubated with a broad specificity anti-HIV serum to  
35 reveal the viral proteins.

1 In addition to reacting with all of the HIV-1 viral  
proteins, the BSR antiserum also crossreacts with the gag  
and pol gene products of HIV-2. This antiserum clearly  
5 recognizes the gag and pol gene products of ANT 70 as well.  
It is evident that the molecular weights of the ANT 70 gene  
products differ from those of either HIV-1 or HIV-2. The  
molecular weights of the various viral proteins are  
summarized in Table 1. The variability in the HIV-1 p17/p18  
10 protein is due to a 6 amino acid insertion which is present  
in some strains between positions 120 and 121 in the HIV-1  
HXB2 sequence. A comparison of the proteins from ANT 70 and  
ANT 70 NA are shown in figure 6. The molecular weights of  
all of the proteins of ANT 70 NA are identical to those of  
15 ANT 70.

In order to investigate further the antigenic relationship  
between HIV-1, HIV-2 and ANT 70, a series of African and  
European anti-HIV-1 sera were diluted 1:1000 and used to  
coat microwell plates for antigen capturing.  
20 Detergent-treated culture supernatant containing HIV-1, ANT  
70, HIV-2 (LAV-2rod) and HIV-2 (isolate 53) were diluted and  
the ability of each antiserum to capture the four different  
isolates was analyzed. Representative results are shown in  
Figure 7. It can be seen from this experiment that the  
25 ability of the various sera to capture HIV-1 is in no way  
related to their ability to capture either HIV-2 or ANT 70.  
In contrast, the ability of these sera to capture LAV-2rod,  
the prototype HIV-2 strain, is strongly correlated with the  
ability of these sera to capture isolate 53, which is also  
30 an HIV-2 strain but an independent isolate. These data  
indicate that ANT 70 is neither HIV-1 nor HIV-2.  
In a series of related antigen capturing experiments, four  
African anti-HIV-1 sera were chosen in order to access their  
ability to bind HIV-1, ANT 70, HIV-2 (LAV-2rod) and HIV-2  
35 (isolate 53) when the IgGs were coated at different



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dilutions. Culture supernatants were diluted so as to give approximately the same optical density when captured on plates coated with the IgG used in panel B of Figure 8.

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Dilutions of the four sera were coated and virus-containing supernatant was added. The assumption was made that similar viruses should give rise to similar titration curves.

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Indeed, in Figure 5, LAV-2rod and isolate 53 both react similarly with the coated IgGs. On the other hand, ANT 70 gave more intense signals at higher IgG dilutions than did either of the HIV-2 isolates and the shapes of the curves obtained with ANT 70 resemble more closely the curves obtained for HIV-1, except that the optical densities are consistently lower.

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Cross reactivity of mouse monoclonal antibodies directed against HIV-1 p24 core protein.

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A panel of mouse monoclonal antibodies (MAbs) prepared against the HIV-1 p24 core protein was tested for their ability to crossreact with ANT 70 and HIV-2 isolates. In principle, any panel of anti-HIV-1 p24 monoclonal antibodies can be used, as long as the series includes monoclonal antibodies which react with different epitopes on the HIV-1 p24 molecule. Ascites fluid containing the antibodies was diluted and used to coat microwell plates. Detergent-treated, virus-containing supernatants were then added to the coated wells. Bound antigen was detected using BSR-HIV IgGs conjugated to horseradish peroxidase. The results obtained are shown in Figure 9.

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In control wells coated with polyclonal broad spectrum IgGs, all virus-containing supernatants gave optical densities which exceeded the limits of the microwell plate reader. However, when tested in wells coated with the various

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monoclonal antibodies, quite a different pattern emerged. Previous studies indicated that all of the MABs tested react against different epitopes on the p24 molecule with the exception of MABs CLB 59 and CLB 21 which have been shown to recognize the same epitope. Both of these two MABs react strongly with HIV-1 as expected and also give a measurable signal with ANT 70 but fail to react with either of the HIV-2 strains. Two other MABs, CLB 64 and CLB 14, bound HIV-1 well and showed a weak affinity for ANT 70 as well as the two HIV-2 isolates. In particular, MAB CLB 14 has been shown to recognize all HIV-1 isolates well (> 150 tested). This MAB must therefore bind to a very highly conserved epitope, remnants of which can also be detected in other human immunodeficiency viruses. The other MABs to p24 (CLB 16, 47 and 19.7) and two others which were raised against the HIV-1 p18 protein (CLB 13.4 and CLB 13.6), failed to recognize either ANT 70 or the two HIV-2 isolates but did capture the corresponding HIV-1 antigens.

20

Reaction of human anti-HIV antisera to viral proteins.

Protein blots of viral proteins from HIV-1 (ARV 4), ANT 70 and HIV-2 (LAV2rod) were prepared after electrophoresis of detergent-solubilized extracts and incubated with various human sera (Figure 10). Panel A shows the reaction of the broad specificity laboratory reference serum with the three virus isolates. In panel B, an anti-HIV-1 antiserum was incubated with the blot and recognizes preferentially HIV-1 proteins. Serum from the woman from whom ANT 70 was isolated (panel C) and her partner from whom ANT 70 NA was isolated (panel D) were tested for their ability to recognize other viral isolates. Both of these sera preferentially recognize ANT 70 including the gp120 envelope protein of this virus. Serum from the partner has a higher titer than serum from the woman from whom ANT 70 was

isolated and recognizes the gp41 of HIV-1. Both of these sera have a higher affinity for ANT 70 than for HIV-1 or the HIV-2 isolates. In contrast, serum from the person from whom HIV-2 isolate 53 was isolated binds preferentially to HIV-2 proteins and recognizes the HIV-2 gp120 envelope protein of this virus as well as the gp41 transmembrane protein (panel E). It does not react with glycoproteins of HIV-1 or ANT 70. These results further indicate that ANT 70 is different from either HIV-1 or HIV-2.

Enzyme immunosorbent assays using coated viral proteins titrations of anti-HIV-1, anti-ANT 70 and anti-HIV-2 sera were performed in microwell plates coated with HIV-1 (ARV-4), ANT 70 and HIV-2 (isolate 53) viral lysates.

Two-fold dilutions of each sera, beginning at an initial dilution of 1:100, were tested for their ability to bind to the coated antigen. Bound antibody was detected using a horseradish peroxidase-labeled goat anti-human IgG conjugate. These results are shown in Figure 11. The anti-HIV-1 serum recognized preferentially the HIV-1 proteins but shows a significant amount of crossreaction with ANT 70 proteins. The HIV-2 proteins were barely detected. In contrast, anti-ANT 70 serum preferentially recognized ANT 70 proteins, showed crossreactivity toward HIV-1 proteins, and reacted better with the HIV-2 coated wells than did the anti-HIV-1 serum as evidenced by the higher optical density values obtained. The anti-HIV-2 serum had a very low titer but nevertheless reacted best with HIV-2 proteins. No detectable signal was observed on HIV-1 or ANT 70 coated wells. The inability to detect crossreaction in this instance is undoubtedly related to the low anti-HIV titer of this serum.

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Analysis of partial chemical cleavage products of viral  
proteins.

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The two reagents used for chemical cleavage, cyanogen  
bromide and BNPS-skatole, were chosen because of their high  
specificities for methionone (29) and tryptophan (30),  
respectively. These two amino acids are also rather  
hydrophobic and are therefore also less likely to found  
located in epitopes on the outer surfaces of protein  
molecules (31). Examination of published amino sequences of  
the gag and pol gene products of HIV-1 (32-36), HIV-2 (19),  
SIVagm (10), SIVmac (9), equine infectious anemia virus  
(EIAV, 37) and Visna (38) reveals that while there is little  
amino acid homology between some of these diverse isolates,  
many of the positions of the methionine residues in these  
proteins and, to an even greater extent, the tryptophan  
residues, are strikingly conserved (figure 12). Furthermore,  
intraspecies variation in these residues is minimal or  
absent, at least in the case of HIV-1 (36) and probably  
holds true for all of the human and simian immunodeficiency  
retroviruses.

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The partial digestion patterns of the gag and pol gene  
products of HIV-1, ANT 70, HIV-2 (LAVrod) and HIV-2 (isolate  
53) are shown in Figure 13.

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Inspection of the CNBr cleavage patterns of the p24 protein  
from the four isolates reveals that the patterns generated  
for HIV-2 (LAV-2rod) and HIV-2 (isolate 53) are identical.  
Different patterns, however, are observed for HIV-1 and for  
ANT 70. Thus, significant differences exist in the  
locations of the methionine residues in the major core  
protein of HIV-1, ANT 70 and HIV-2. In the case of the p17  
core protein, differences are observed between the two HIV-2  
isolates. Inspection of the published sequence for HIV-2rod

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1 indicates that there is a methionine located 18 amino acids  
from the carboxyl terminus of this protein. We conclude  
that this methionine must be absent in the corresponding  
5 protein from isolate 53. From the cleavage pattern it is  
also possible to deduce the presence of a methionine near  
(10-15 amino acids) one of the termini of the p16 from ANT  
70. CNBr cleavage of the retroviral reverse transcriptase  
reveals that again, the proteins from the two HIV-2  
10 isolates are identical, while different patterns are  
observed for both HIV-1 and ANT 70 proteins. In the case of  
the p31 endonuclease derived from the 3'-portion of the pol  
gene, similarities can be deduced between all of the  
isolates although some minor differences are apparent.

15 BNPS-skatole cleavage of the p24 proteins from the four  
isolates results in strikingly similar patterns. It is  
evident from Figure 8 that this is to be expected since the  
tryptophan positions in this protein are very highly  
20 conserved, particularly for the retroviruses of human and  
simian origin. We conclude that the tryptophan positions in  
the ANT 70 p25 protein also conform to this pattern.  
Inspection of the patterns reveals, however, that minor  
differences can be observed, not in the overall appearance  
25 of the pattern but rather in the apparent molecular weights  
of the species generalized by cleavage. In particular,  
differences are detected in the apparent molecular weights  
of the central spots in each pattern. As expected, the  
patterns for HIV-2 (LAV-2rod) and HIV-2 (isolate 53) are  
30 identical. The central spot in the pattern for ANT 70 has  
however, a larger apparent molecular weight while the  
central spot for HIV-1 (ARV-4) has a lower molecular weight.  
In regard to the p16, the positions of the tryptophans in  
the ANT 70 protein appear to resemble more closely the  
35 positions of the tryptophans found in the HIV-2 protein.  
The HIV-1 p17 has a tryptophan located 16 amino acids from

1 the amino terminus of the protein and gives rise to an  
additional spot not seen in the ANT 70 and HIV-2 patterns  
following BNPS-skatole cleavage. The tryptophan  
5 corresponding to the one at position 36 in the HIV-1 p17  
sequence is conserved in all isolates.

The patterns generated by cleavage of the reverse  
transcriptase from the four isolates are complex but is is  
10 once again apparent that the two HIV-2 isolates are  
identical. Patterns are obtained for ANT 70 which  
corresponds neither to the pattern obtained for HIV-1 nor to  
the HIV-2 pattern. Differences in apparent molecular  
weights of the cleavage products of the p31 endonuclease are  
15 also observed but the patterns generated from the  
corresponding proteins from HIV-1, ANT 70, and HIV-2 also  
show common features which suggests a conserved structure.

## Results

### 20 Viral Nucleic Acids

#### a. Hybridization of HIV-1 and HIV-2 cDNA to viral RNAs.

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25 Nucleicacids crosshybridization between HIV-1 and RNA from  
the viruses HIV-2 and ANT 70 was evaluated by performing the  
hybridization with the SacI-BglII HIV-1 restriction fragment  
which had been inserted into the vector pUC13. This  
fragment contains a portion of the 5' LTR, including the R  
region, the entire gag gene and most of the pol gene of  
30 HIV-1. Under stringent hybridization conditions,  
hybridization was only observed between this probe and the  
RNA derived from HIV-1 (SF4). No hybridization was observed  
between the probe and either HIV-2 or ANT 70 (figure 14).  
35 This indicates that the gag and pol regions of HIV-2 and ANT  
70 are significantly different from the corresponding region

of HIV-1.

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## 10

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## 25

using the dideoxynucleotide method:

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ANT 70 cDNA and the viral sequences to which they correspond

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1. HIV-3 LTR

      10          20          30          40          50          60
5  OOCATGGATT TGAAGTACA CATAAAGAAA TACTGATGTG GAAGTTTGAT AGATCTCTAG
      70          80          90         100         110         120
   GCAACACCCA TGTTCCTATG ATAACTCACC CAGAGCTCTT CCAGAAGGAC TAAAAACTGC
      130         140         150         160         170         180
   TGAOCTGAAG ATTGCTTACA CTGTGGAAct TTCCAGCAAA GACTGCTGAC ACTGOGGGGA
10      190         200         210         220         230         240
   CTTTCCAGTG GGAGGGCAG GGGGGGGTTC GGGGAGTGGC TAACCTCAG AAGCTGCATA
      250         260         270         280         290         300
   TAAGCAGCAG CTTTCTGTT GTACGGGGTC TOGGTTAGAG GACCAGGTCT GAGOOOGGGA
               U3  ←→  R
15      310         320         330         340         350         360
   GCTOCTGGC CTCTAGCGA ACCGCTCGT TAACGCTCAA TAAAGCTTC CTTGAGTGAG
                                   Polyadenylation signal

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2. Sequences from HIV-3 3'ORF

5                    10                    20                    30                    40                    50                    60  
AACATGGGAAAACGCATTGAGTAAAGGTAAATTTGAGGGATGGGCAGCAGTAAGACAAAGA  
AsnMetGlyAsnAlaLeuArgLysGlyLysPheGluGlyTrpAlaAlaValArgGluArg  
                  70                    80                    90                    100                    110                    120  
ATGAGAAGAACTAGAACTTTCCTGAGTCTGAACCATGCGCACCTGGAGTAGGACAGATC  
10 MetArgArgThrArgThrPheProGluSerGluProCysAlaProGlyValGlyGlnIle  
                  130                    140                    150                    160                    170                    180  
TCCAGGGAATTAGCAGCTAGATGAGGGATACCAAGTTCCCATACTCCTCAAAACAATGCA  
SerArgGluLeuAlaAlaArgGlyGlyIleProSerSerHisThrProGlnAsnAsnAla  
                  190                    200                    210                    220                    230                    240  
15 GCOCTTGCACTCCTAGAAAGTACCAAGAGGAAGAAGTAGGTTTTCCAGTAGCACTCAA  
AlaLeuAlaPheLeuGluSerHisGlnGluGluGluValGlyPheProValAlaProGln  
                  250                    260                    270                    280                    290                    300  
GTGCOCTCTAAGGCCAATGACCTATAAAGGAGCATTGCACTCAGCTTCTTTTTTAAAGAA  
ValProLeuArgProMetThrTyrLysGlyAlaPheAspLeuSerPhePheLeuLysGlu  
20                    310                    320                    330                    340                    350                    360  
AAGGGAGGACTCGAAGGGTTAAATTACTCCCATAAAGAGCAGAAATCCTGGATCTTTGG  
LysGlyGlyLeuGluGlyLeuIleTyrSerHisLysArgAlaGluIleLeuAspLeuTrp  
  
GIGTATAA  
25 ValTyr

## 1 Discussion

We have isolated a novel human immunodeficiency-associated retrovirus from a Camerounian woman (ANT 70) and her partner (ANT 70 NA). At the time the original virus isolation was performed, the woman was only slightly seropositive, gave ambiguous results in the western blot test and was clinically asymptomatic. Since that time, the woman has begun to develop some of the symptoms of AIDS-related complex (ARC). In contrast, her partner, from whom we were also able to isolate a virus with the same characteristics as the original isolate, was suffering from lymphadenopathy and has since developed other symptoms characteristic of AIDS. This novel isolate may therefore be considered to be a human immunodeficiency virus. The fact that this same virus could be isolated from sexual partners also suggests a mode of transmission which is similar to that of human retroviruses.

The virus was first recognized as being different from HIV-1 on the basis of its altered ability to be captured in a differential antigen capturing assay. This has proven to be a highly reliable test which is able to distinguish between HIV-1 and non-HIV-1 strains. That this isolate is not HIV-1 is borne out at the protein level by 1.) the differing molecular weights of the viral proteins, 2.) a different pattern of crossreactivity with anti- HIV-1 antiserum than HIV-1, 3.) a drastically reduced ability to be recognized by mouse monoclonal antibodies raised against HIV-1 p24 and p17 core proteins, 4.) preferential recognition of ANT 70 proteins over HIV-1 proteins by antisera from the virus carrier, and 5.) patterns of partial cleavage of four of the most highly conserved viral proteins which do not match the patterns obtained when HIV-1 proteins are subjected to the same treatment. Nevertheless, sera from the two individuals infected with this virus recognize the HIV-1 gp41 envelope protein. By the same criteria listed above, it is also clear that ANT 70 is not HIV-2. Indeed, the

1 antigenic differences between ANT 70 and HIV-1 are  
smaller than those between HIV-2 and HIV-1. This is  
particularly evident from the results presented in Figures 8  
and 10.

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Additional compelling evidence that ANT 70 is a unique  
virus different from HIV-1 and HIV-2 comes from the partial  
peptide maps. We have shown that there are significant  
differences in the most highly conserved viral proteins.

10 The two HIV-2 isolates which were used for comparison gave  
essentially identical cleavage patterns except in the case  
of CNBr cleavage of the p17 core protein. It should be  
noted, however, that the p17 core protein exhibits more  
variability than the p24 protein, at least in HIV-1 strains  
15 (34). Whether or not this also holds true for HIV-2 awaits  
sequence determination on more strains than have been  
analyzed to date.

In light of the fact that ANT 70 is antigenically more  
closely related to HIV-1 than is HIV-2, as evidenced by a  
20 higher degree of crossreactivity which extends even to the  
gp41 envelope protein, it was essential to establish that  
ANT 70 was more than simply a genetic variant of HIV-1.  
This was possible by investigating the locations of some of  
the most highly conserved amino acids in a number of viral  
25 proteins which are least subject to genetic variation. That  
major differences were noted in the cleavage patterns  
indicates that HIV-1, HIV-2 and ANT 70 are three genetically  
distinct viruses. On the other hand, the same series of  
experiments also revealed similarities between the viruses  
30 which may indicate that all three arose from a common  
progenitor.

The hybridization data also support the notion that ANT 70  
is fundamentally different from either HIV-1 and HIV-2. As  
35 long as the conditions under which the hybridization is  
performed are stringent, a distinction can easily be made  
between the three virus types. \*

1 Analysis of the cDNA sequences revealed that the insert is  
derived from the 3' end of the viral genome. An analysis of  
the homology between these sequences and the sequence of  
HIV-1 and HIV-2 reveal that ANT 70 is somewhat more closely  
5 related to HIV-1, particularly in the LTR sequences (approx.  
70 % homology). The differences are nevertheless of such  
magnitude as to rule out the possibility that ANT 70 is  
simply a genetic variant of HIV-1. The ANT 70 3'LTR also  
contains the signal sequences which are typical of  
10 retroviral LTRs.

The existence of a third type of human immunodeficiency  
virus has immediate epidemiological implications and  
consequences for blood bank testing. As has been shown,  
15 antibodies from people infected with this virus react  
preferentially with this virus, although these antibodies  
also crossreact with HIV-1 proteins. While it was possible  
to detect a positive reaction of ANT 70 NA serum in enzyme  
immunoassays, immunofluorescence assays and Western Blot  
20 assays based on HIV-1 proteins, the fact that the positive  
signal was due to a crossreaction inevitably implies that  
the sensitivity of such tests will be less for antibodies  
produced in response to this virus. This was amply  
demonstrated by the enzyme immunoassay results (Figure 11).  
25 Furthermore, one criterion for seropositivity in the Western  
blot assay is the presence of detectable antibodies to both  
a gag and/or pol protein and one of the envelope proteins.  
Since in the case of the two individuals infected with ANT  
70 and ANT 70 NA, respectively, crossreaction was observed  
30 to both HIV-1 p24 and the envelope proteins, the conclusion  
which is invariably drawn is that these individuals are  
infected with HIV-1 but for some reason fail to develop high  
titers against HIV-1. It is possible therefore, that this  
virus is more widespread than is currently realized. From  
35 an epidemiological standpoint, it is essential to develop

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specific diagnostic tests for this virus in order to  
evaluate the limits of the geographical area in Africa in  
which the virus can be found, and to evaluate the extent to  
which this virus has been disseminated.

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## 5

1. HIV-3 retrovirus or variants of this virus having the essential morphological and immunological properties of any of the retroviruses deposited at the European Collection of Animal Cell Cultures (ECACC) under N° V88060301.

2. The purified retrovirus of claim 1, characterized in that said essential morphological and immunological properties are as follows:

15

- The virus exhibits a tropism for T4 lymphocytes.
- The virus is cytotoxic for the lymphocytes that it infects.
- The virus has a diameter of approximately 120 nm.
- The virus possesses a magnesium dependent reverse transcriptase activity.
- It can be cultivated in T4 receptor-bearing immortalized cell lines.
- Lysates of the virus contain a p25 protein which is immunologically distinct from the p19 protein of HTLV-I by Western blot analysis.
- Lysates of the virus contain a gp120 protein which is immunologically distinct from the gp110 protein of HTLV-I by Western blot analysis.
- The lysate of the virus contains in addition a glycoprotein with a molecular weight of 40,000 - 45,000.
- The genomic RNA of HIV-3 hybridizes neither with the sequences of HIV-1 nor with the sequences of HIV-2 under stringent hybridization conditions.

- 1 3. The retrovirus of claim 1 or 2, characterized in that  
the nucleotide sequence of its genomic RNA which comprises  
an R region and an U3 region also comprises a nucleotide  
5 sequence corresponding with the following nucleotide  
sequence:

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35 13. The antigen of claim 10 having the aminoacid sequence, or a part of said sequence, of the p26 protein obtained by subjecting the protein mixture produced by HIV-3 to gel electrophoresis and isolating the p26 protein in a manner known per se.

1 14. The antigen of claim 10 having the aminoacid sequence,  
or a part of said sequence, of thegp41 protein obtained by  
subjecting the protein mixture produced by HIV-3 to gel  
5 electrophoresis and isolating the gp41 protein in a manner  
known per se.

15 15. The antigen of claim 10 having the aminoacid sequence,  
or a part of said sequence, of thegp120 protein obtained by  
10 subjecting the protein mixture produced by HIV-3 to gel  
electrophoresis and isolating the gp120 protein in a manner  
known per se.

15 16. A method for the detection of antibodies against HIV-3  
retrovirus in a biological liquid, such as a serum or spinal  
fluid, in particular for the diagnosis of a potential or  
existing ARC or AIDS caused by said HIV-3 retrovirus,  
characterized by contacting body fluid of a person to be  
20 diagnosed with a composition of any of claims 5 to 8 or with  
an antigen of any claims 9 to 15 and detecting the  
immunological conjugate formed between said anti-HIV-3  
antibodies and the antigen(s) used.

25 17. The method of claim 16, characterized in that said  
detection of said immunological conjugate is achieved by  
reacting said immunological conjugate with a labeled reagent  
selected from antihuman immunoglobulin-antibodies or  
bacterial A protein or G protein and detecting the complex  
formed between said conjugate and said reagent.

30 18. A kit for the detection of anti-HIV-3-antibodies in a  
biological fluid, comprising

- 35 - a composition as defined in any of claims 5 to 8 or an  
antigen as defined in any of claim 9 to 15, and  
- means for detecting the immunological complex formed.



1 19. The kit of claim 18, characterized in that said means  
for detecting said immunological complex comprise antihuman  
immunoglobulin(s) or protein A and means for detecting the  
5 complex formed between the anti-HIV-3 antibodies contained  
in the detected immunological conjugate.

20. An immunogenic composition containing an envelope  
glycoprotein of HIV-3 retrovirus, in particular gp41 or  
10 pgl20, or a part of said glycoprotein, in combination with a  
pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle suitable for the  
constitution of vaccines effective against HIV-3.

21. The composition of claim 20, characterized by containing  
15 at least part of a glycoprotein comprising the protein  
backbone of the envelope protein, or a part thereof, as  
defined in any of claims 14 to 15.

22. Monoclonal antibodies characterized by their ability to  
20 specifically recognize one of the antigens as defined in any  
of claims 11 to 15 in particular monoclonal antibodies  
specifically raised against said antigens.

23. The secreting hybridomas of the monoclonal antibodies of  
25 claim 22.

24. Nucleic acids, optionally labeled, derived in part at  
least of RNA of HIV-3 retrovirus or of variants thereof.

25. The nucleic acid of claim 24, characterized by  
30 containing at least part of the cDNA corresponding with the  
entire genomic RNA of HIV-3 retrovirus.

26. The nucleic acid of claim 24 containing the nucleotide  
35 sequence as identified in claim 3.

27. The nucleic acids of claim 24 characterized by  
containing nucleotide sequences coding for at least part of  
the aminoacid sequences of proteins as defined in any of  
claims 11 to 13.

1

28. The nucleic acids of claim 24, characterized by  
containing nucleotide sequences coding for at least part of  
5 the aminoacid sequences of glycoproteins as defined in any  
of claims 14 to 15.

29. The nucleic acids of any of claims 24 to 28.  
characterized by being formed into a recombinant nucleic  
10 acid comprising a nucleic acid from a vector having said  
cDNA, or a part of said cDNA, inserted therein.

30. The recombinant nucleic acid of claim 29 characterized  
by being labeled.

15

31. A process for the detection of HIV-3 retrovirus or of  
its RNA in a biological liquid or tissue, characterized by  
contacting nucleic acids contained in said biological liquid  
or tissue with a probe containing a nucleic acid according  
20 to any of claims 25 to 30 under stringent hybridization  
conditions, washing the hybrid formed with a solution  
preserving said stringent conditions, and detecting the  
hybrid formed.

32. A process for the production of HIV-3 retrovirus  
characterized by culturing human T4 lymphocytes, or  
permanent cell lines derived therefrom carrying the T4  
phenotype, with lymphocytes or cell lines that have  
previously been infected with an isolate of HIV-3  
30 retrovirus, as well as recovering and purifying the  
retrovirus from the culture medium.

33. A process for the production of antigens of HIV-3  
retrovir, characterized by lysing the retrovirus and  
35 recovering the lysate containing said antigens.

1

34. A process for the production of any of the proteins or glycoproteins p12, p16, p26, gp41 and gp120 as defined hereinbefore, or of a part thereof, characterized by inserting the corresponding nucleic acid sequence in an expression vector, transforming a host with said vector, culturing the transformed host as well as recovering and purifying the expressed protein.

5

10

35. A process for the production of a hybridization probe for the detection of the RNA of HIV-3 retrovirus, characterized by inserting a DNA sequence, particularly of any of claims 24 to 29 in a cloning vector by in vitro recombination, cloning the modified vector obtained in a suitable cellular host, and recovering the hybridization probe.

15

20

36. A method for detecting antigen of HIV-3, characterized by coating a surface with an immunoglobulin fraction raised against HIV-3, bringing a body or culture fluid to be analyzed into contact with the immunoglobulins, and detecting the complex formed between the immunoglobulins and the antigen.

25

30

35

The diagram illustrates the workflow of 2D gel electrophoresis, starting with sample preparation and ending with detection of cleavage products.

- Initial Setup:** A gel with a **MARKER LANE** and **SAMPLES** is shown.
- Staining:** The gel is stained with **COOMASSIE BLUE**.
- Blotting:** Proteins are located using **ANTISERUM AND CONJUGATE**.
- Excision:** **PROTEINS OF INTEREST** are excised and incubated with a **CLEAVAGE REAGENT**.
- Equilibration:** The excised lanes are **EQUILIBRATE**d.
- Preparation for Second Gel:** Lanes are **EXCISE**d, **ROTATE 90°**, and loaded onto a **NEW GEL** for **ELECTROPHORESIS**.
- Detection:** The products are detected using **ANTISERUM AND CONJUGATE**.

FIG. 1



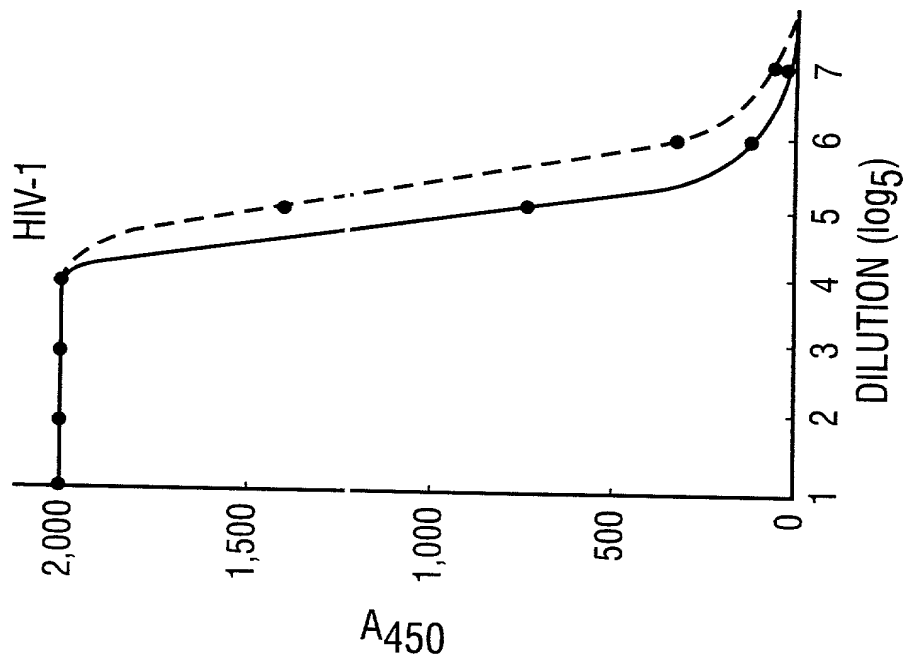


FIG. 3A

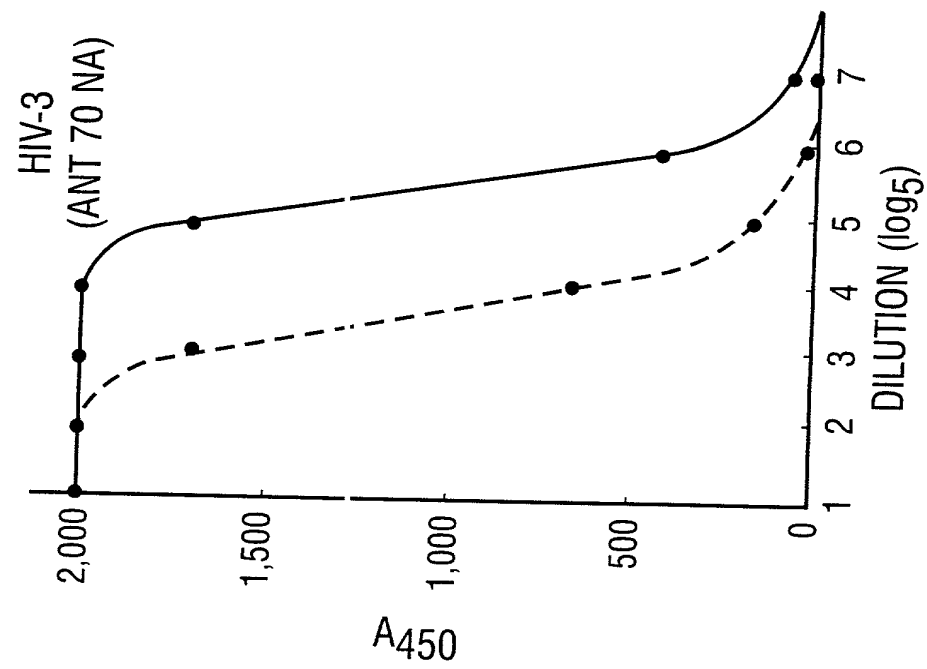
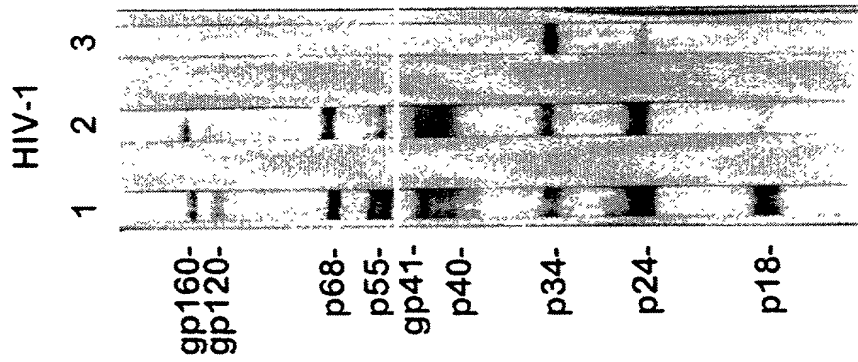
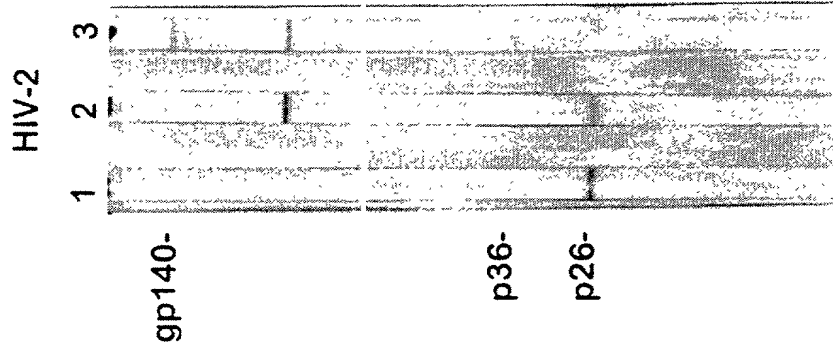


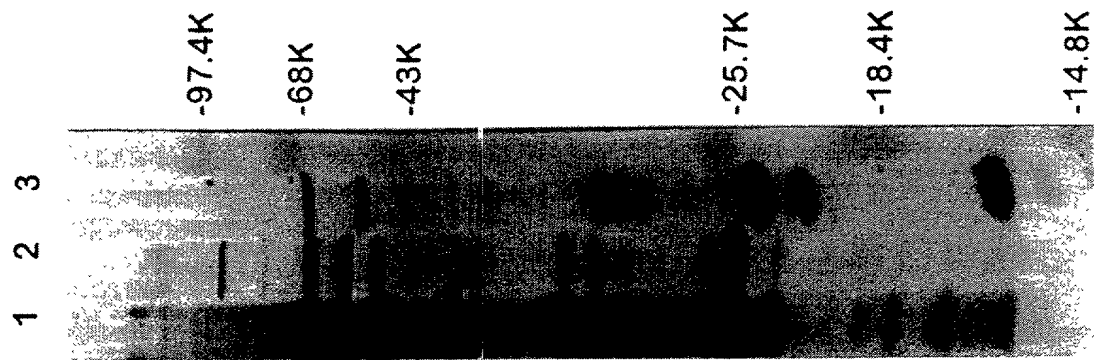
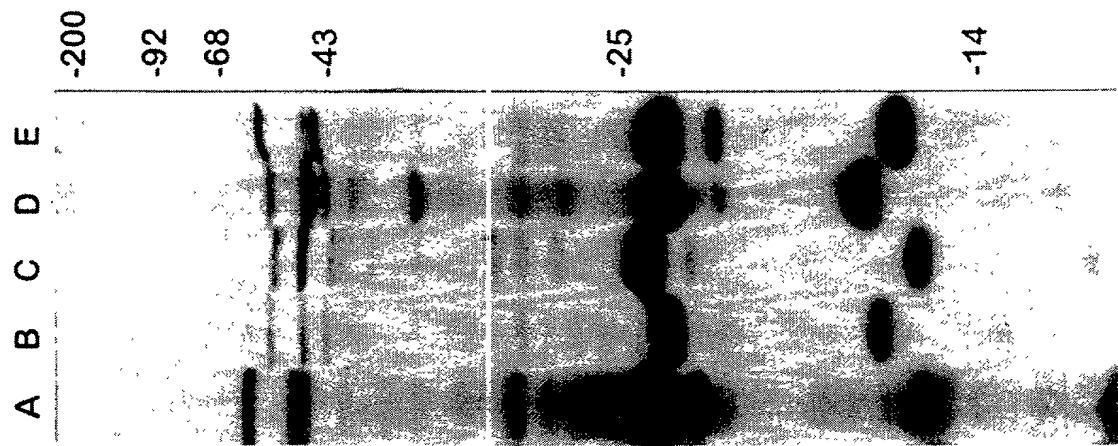
FIG. 3B

[illegible]

**FIG. 4A**



**FIG. 4B**







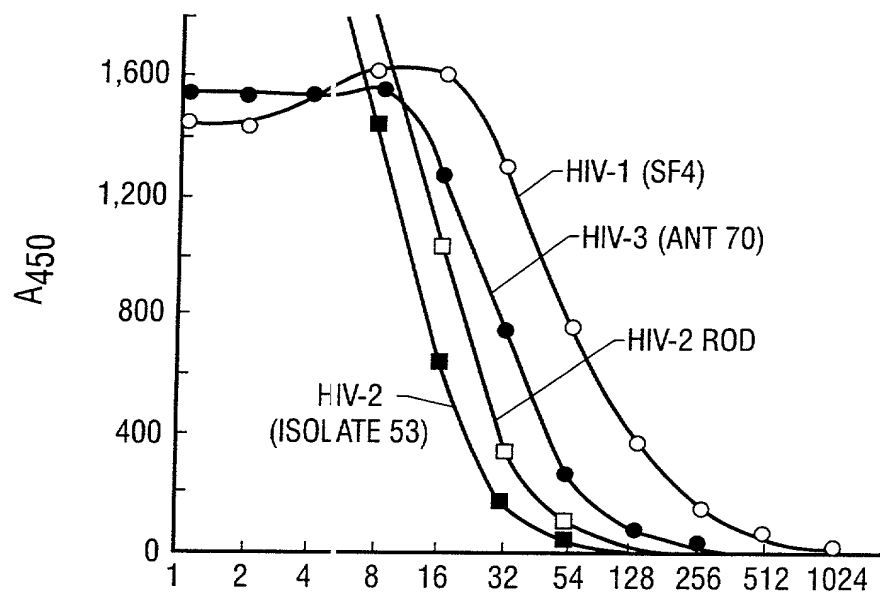


FIG. 8A

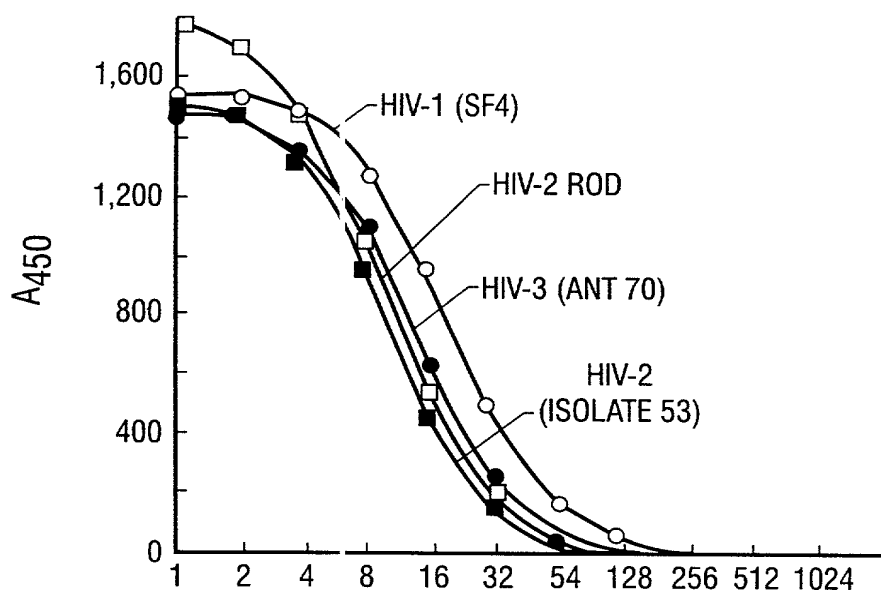


FIG. 8B

Figure 1 is a line graph showing the infectivity of four HIV strains (HIV-1, HIV-2, HIV-3, and HIV-2 ROD) after serial dilution. The y-axis represents the absorbance at 450 nm ( $A_{450}$ ), ranging from 0 to 1,600. The x-axis represents the dilution steps, ranging from 1 to 1024. The graph shows that HIV-1 (SF4) and HIV-3 (ANT 70) maintain high infectivity at low dilutions, while HIV-2 (ISOLATE 53) and HIV-2 ROD show significantly lower infectivity, with HIV-2 ROD being the least infectious.

Dilution Step	HIV-1 (SF4) ( $A_{450}$ )	HIV-3 (ANT 70) ( $A_{450}$ )	HIV-2 (ISOLATE 53) ( $A_{450}$ )	HIV-2 ROD ( $A_{450}$ )
1	1,600	1,600	400	400
2	1,500	1,500	350	350
4	1,400	1,400	300	300
8	1,300	1,300	250	250
16	1,200	1,200	200	200
32	1,100	1,100	150	150
54	1,000	1,000	100	100
128	900	900	50	50
256	800	800	20	20
512	700	700	10	10
1024	600	600	5	5

Dilution	HIV-1 (SF4) A <sub>450</sub>	HIV-3 (ANT 70) A <sub>450</sub>
1	300	50
2	280	40
4	250	30
8	150	10
16	100	5
32	50	2
54	20	0
128	10	0
256	5	0
512	2	0
1024	1	0

FIG. 8D

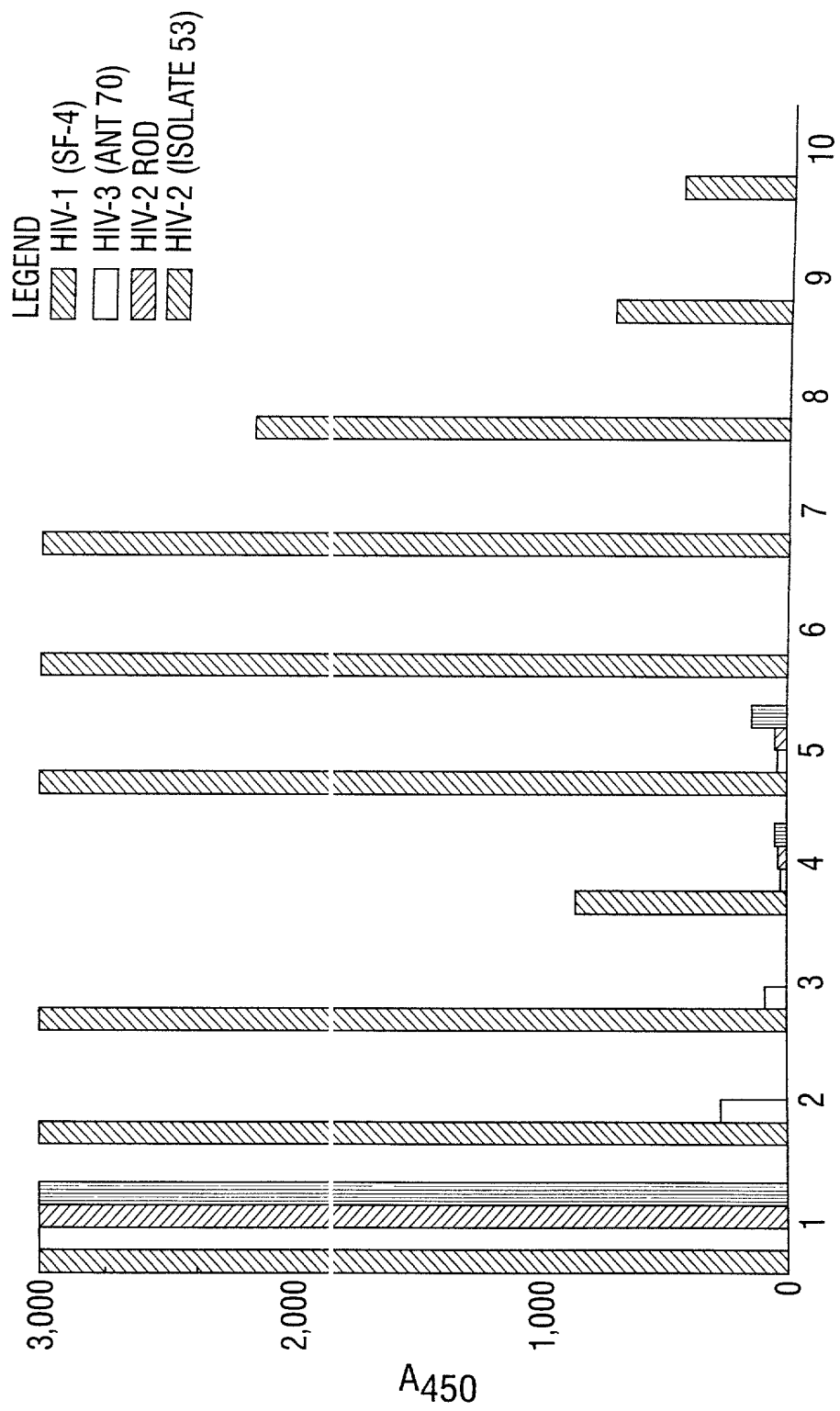


FIG. 9

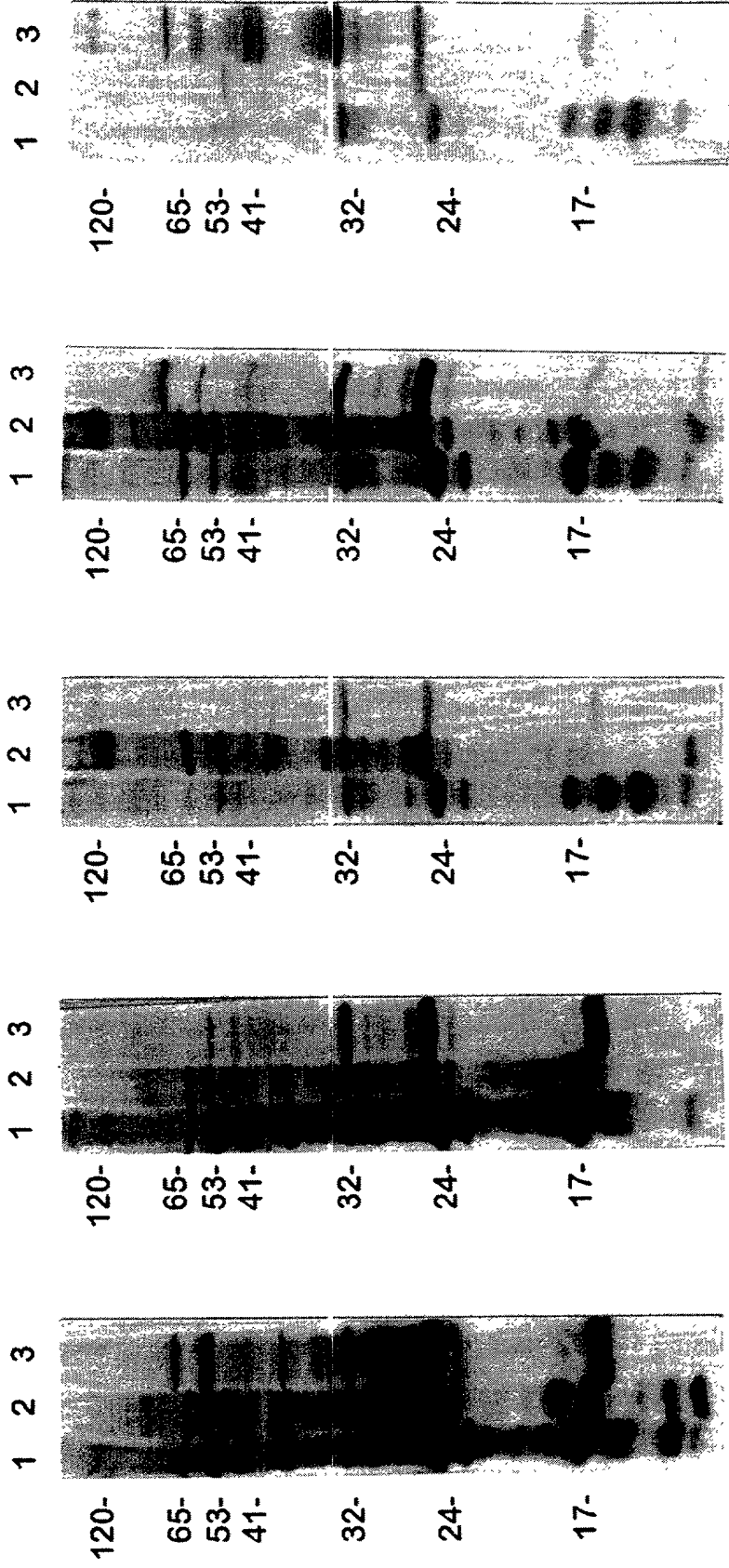


FIG.10A FIG.10B FIG.10C FIG.10D FIG.10E

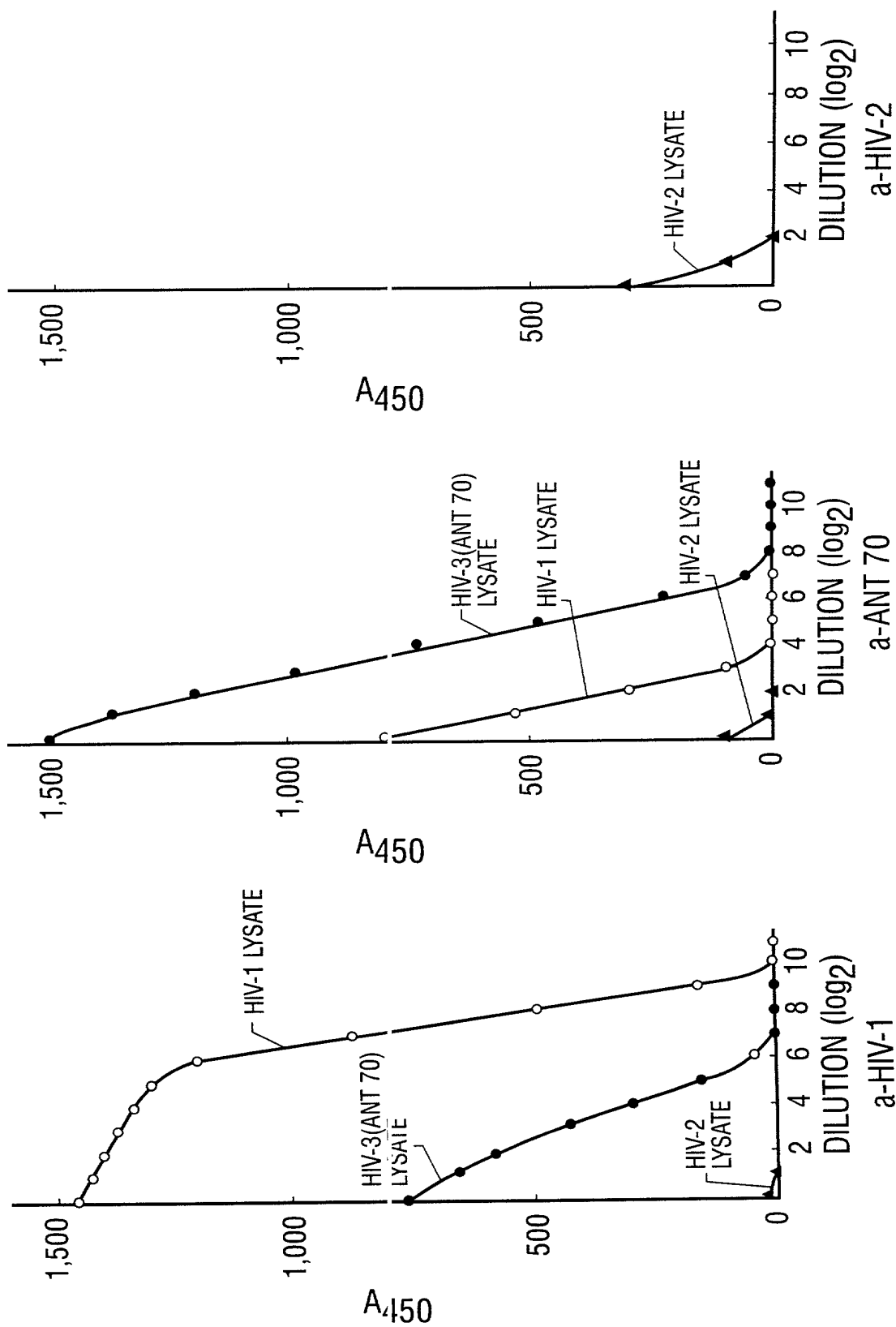


FIG. 11C

FIG. 11B

FIG. 11A

**METHIONINE**

Virus	Position 0-20	Position 20-40	Position 40-60	Position 60-80	Position 80-100	Position 100-120	Position 120-140
VISNA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EIVA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STLV-III agm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SIV-1 mac	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIV-2(LAV-2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIV-1(ARV-2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**TRYPTOPHAN**

Virus	Position 0-20	Position 20-40	Position 40-60	Position 60-80	Position 80-100	Position 100-120	Position 120-140
VISNA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EIVA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STLV-III agm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SIV-1 mac	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIV-2(LAV-2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIV-1(ARV-2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

FIG. 12A

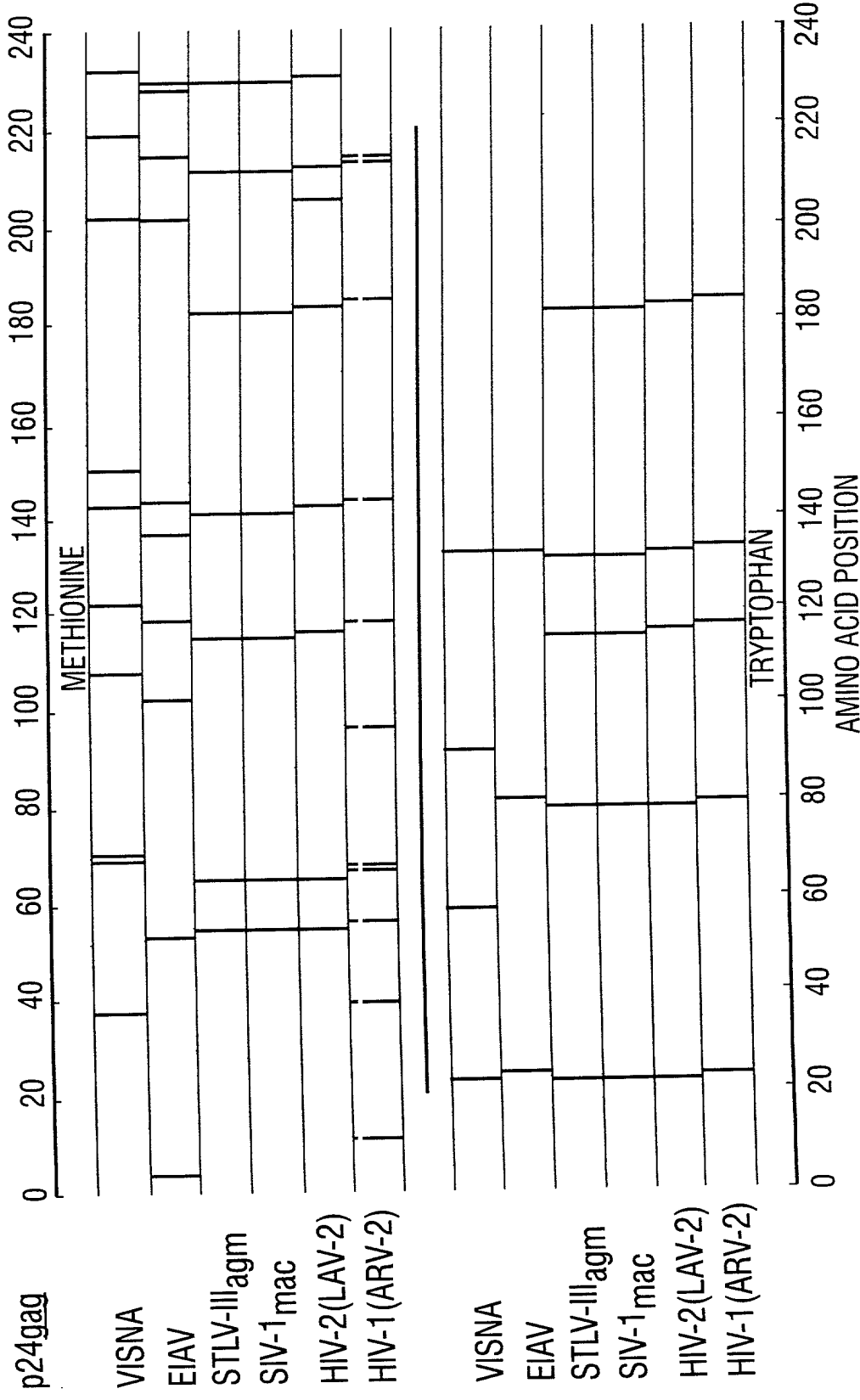


FIG. 12B



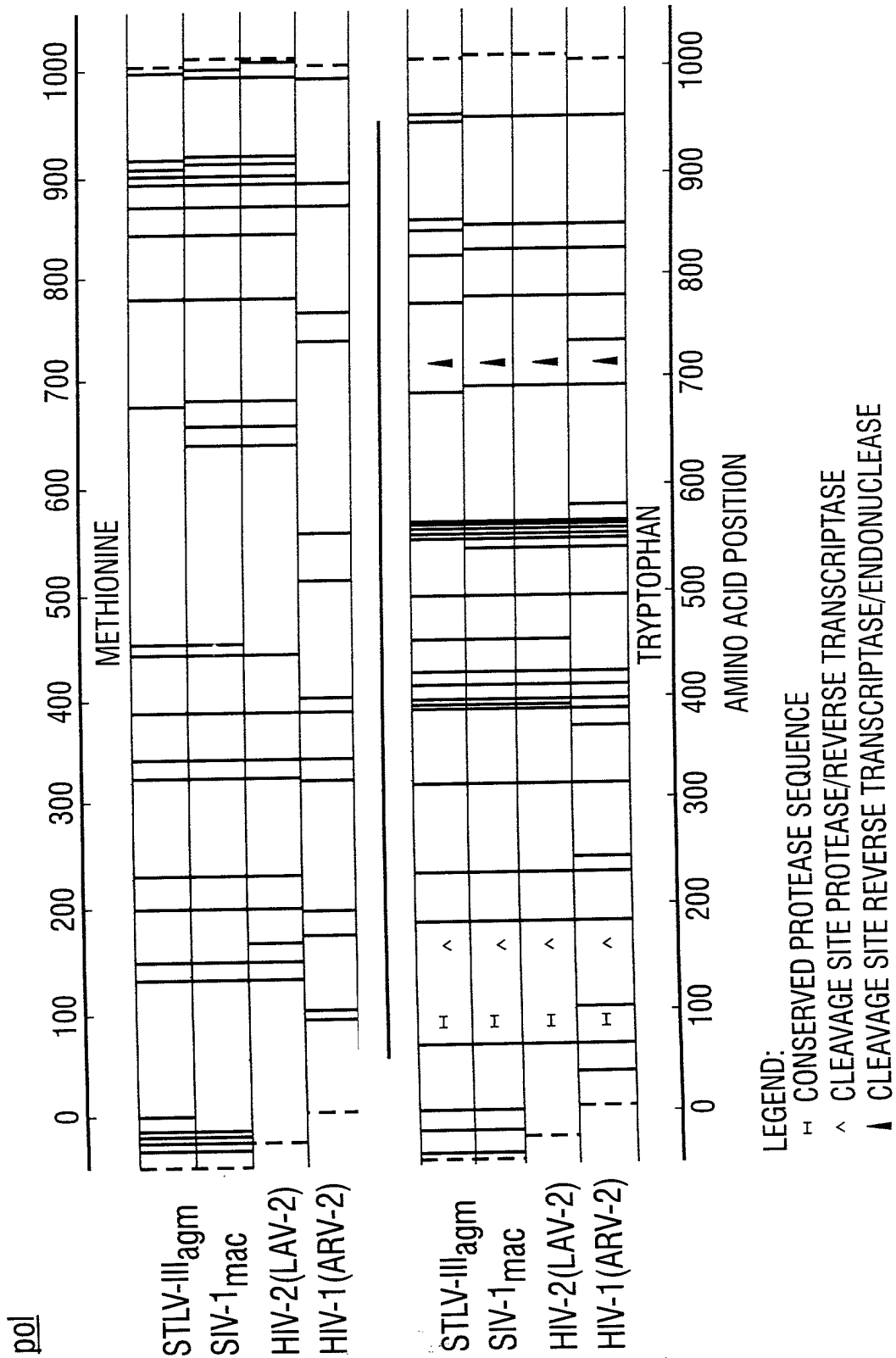
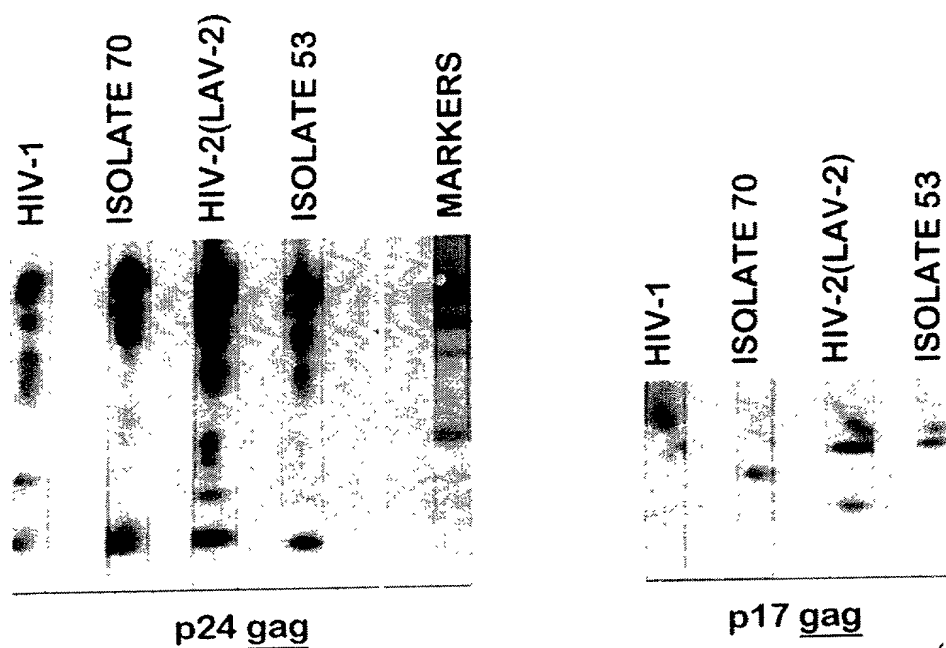


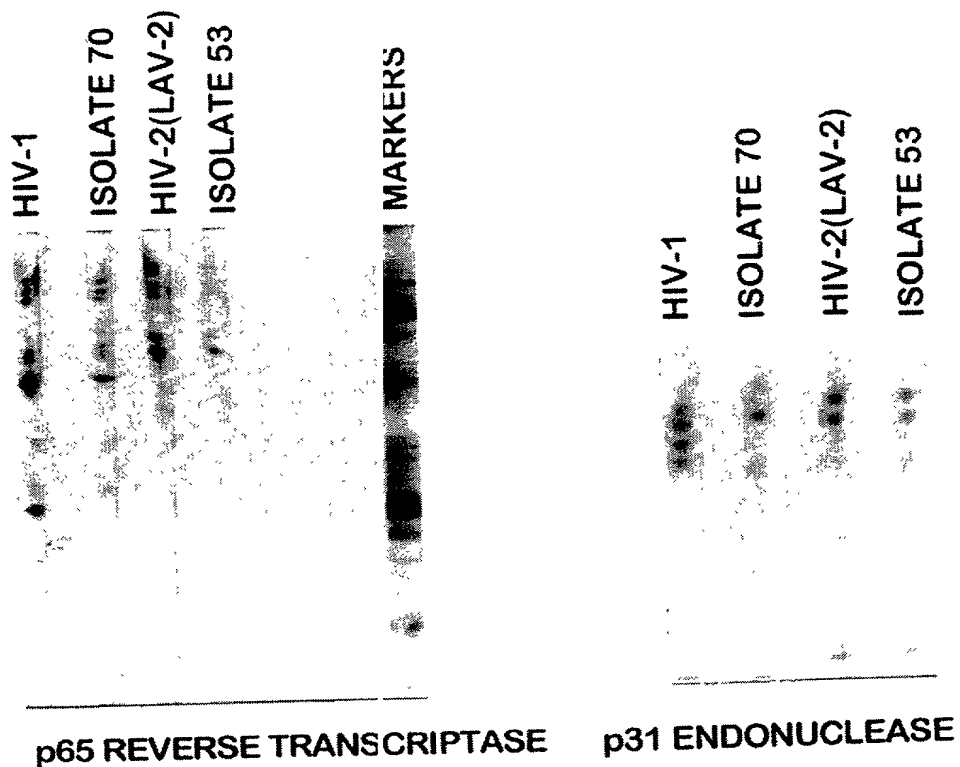
FIG. 12C

CNBr CLEAVAGE

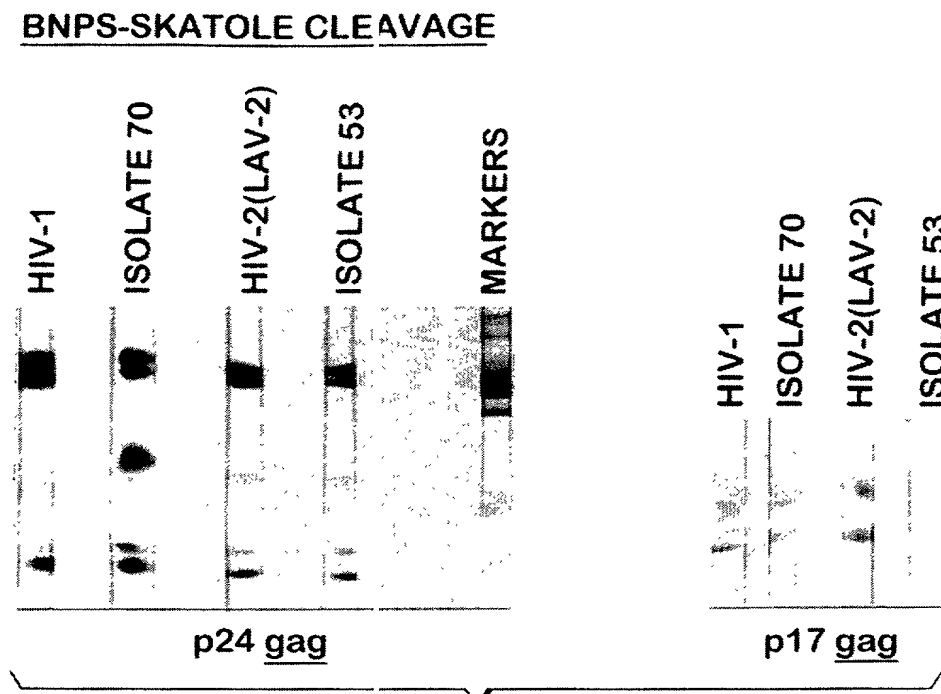


**FIG. 13A**

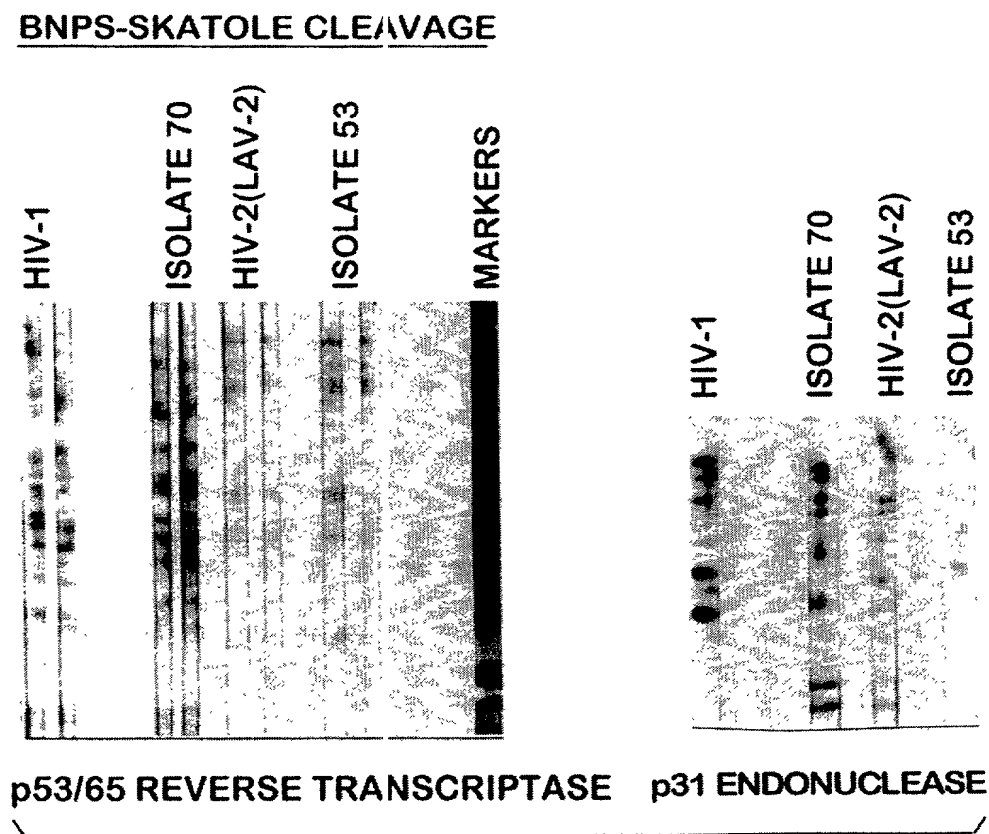
CNBr CLEAVAGE



**FIG. 13B**



**FIG. 13C**



**FIG. 13D**



## DECLARATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or the below named inventors are the original, first and joint inventors (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled HIV-3 RETROVIRUS AND ITS USE, the specification of which:

☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on 2/9/90 as Application Serial No. 460,913.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)			Priority <u>Claimed</u>
<u>88 109 200.1</u>	<u>Europe</u>	<u>6/9/88</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes/No
(Number)	(Country)	(Date Filed)	
<hr/>			Yes/No
(Number)	(Country)	(Date Filed)	

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a), regarding events which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

<u>PCT/EP 89/00643</u>	<u>June 8, 1989</u>	<u>Pending</u>
(Application Serial No.)	(Filing Date)	(Status)

I hereby direct that all correspondence and telephone calls be addressed to Sydney Leach, Arnold, White & Durkee, P.O. Box 4433, Houston, Texas 77210, (713) 787-1400.

I hereby declare that all statements made of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001

of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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(First) (Initial) (Last)

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(First) (Initial) (Last)

Inventor's Signature: 

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(First) (Initial) (Last)

Inventor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:  12.01.90 Country of Citizenship: Belgium

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(If different from Residence Address)